**The Eightfold Path of Nonviolence**

Mark Kurlansky, in his book *Nonviolence: The History of a Dangerous Idea* (2006, p. 5), stated that “while every major language has a word for violence, there is no word to express the idea of nonviolence.” Gandhi (1962) stated that the closest terminology to nonviolence comes from the Sanskrit word *Ahimsa*. “*Ahimsa* is the complete absence of violence in word and even thought as well as action” (p. xxv). *Ahimsa i*s a philosophical, spiritual stance that is evolutionary in nature, whereby a state of pure *Ahimsa* can never be achieved (Kurlansky, 2006; Gandhi, 1962). According to Gandhi, “Nonviolence is a perfect stage. It is a goal towards which all humanity moves naturally, though unconsciously” (1962, p. xxv). In his autobiography *Stride Towards Freedom* (1958), King stated that “non-violence is a powerful weapon. It is a weapon unique in history that cuts without wounding and ennobles the man who wields it. It is a sword that heals” (p. 70).

Gandhi referred to consciousness as *Satyagraha.* “*Satyagraha*—literally ‘holding on to Truth’—is the name he coined for his method of fighting without violence or retaliation” (1962,

p. xxiv). The application of *Satyagraha*, in essence, supports consciousness and counteracts the influence(s) of evil. “It means that evil is real only insofar as we support it. The essence of holding on to truth is to withdraw support of what is wrong. If enough people do this from a great enough depth—evil has to collapse from lack of support” (p. xxiv). Herein lies the essence of the nonviolent way.

 In the Chinese language, the word closest to nonviolence is teh. “In Taoism, there is a concept embodied in the *teh*. Not exactly nonviolence, which is an active force, *teh* is the virtue of not fighting—nonviolence is the path to *teh*.” (Kurlansky, 2006, p. 11). “In Taoism *teh* is a perfection of nature, and, as in Hinduism, is something few people have the strength and character to live up to” (p. 12). Ultimately, *teh*, like Ahimsa, is a state that cannot be perfected but can be pursued through a path of nonviolence.

 According to Kurlansky, the one word that comes close to fitting Satyagraha and Ahimsa is the Islamic term jihad, which means “nonviolent activism.” In the Quran, the term *jihad* “originally meant to strive with great intensity for a relationship with Allah. However, this striving was supposed to be an internal struggle to become the perfect Muslim that God-Allah-wanted each Muslim to be” (p. 36). Unfortunately, in the term jihad, the paradigm of the internal struggle is misunderstood as an outer goal of converting the other to Islam, in the name of God. In its essence, however, the word jihad supports the journey of nonviolent activism or individuation (p. 36).

Gandhi’s lifelong dedication to these two powerful Hindu concepts *Satyagraha* (truth-force) and *Ahimsa* (love force or nonviolence) are the two foundational nonviolent principles upon which King’s six tenets of nonviolence rest. Together, these eight principles define what I call the Eightfold Path of Nonviolence.

Martin Luther King, Jr. in his autobiography *Stride Towards Freedom*, tenet number one states that ***“Nonviolence is passive physically but active spiritually…it is not passive nonresistance to evil; it is active nonviolent resistance to evil”*** (1958, p. 90). As a *Satyagrahi,* King’s capacity to consistently demonstrate active nonviolent resistance to evil was hard fought by the time he had arrived in Selma in 1965. He knew that pacifism would be the death knell of the protests he was to conduct. King stated that active nonviolent resistance “is not a method of stagnant passivity. For 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” (King, 1958, p. 90). Indeed, nonviolent activism invites the demonstrator to participate in a personal and communal spiritual process that focuses exclusively on the transformation of the inner world. In analysis, the same process unfolds within the patient.

By the time patients arrive in the consulting room, they have likely endured years of suffering from the oppressive inner other whom they are convinced lives outside of themselves. It is a suffering so engrained that the patient has yet to define him- or herself as a person of free will, able to individuate from and in relationship to his or her personal shadow. As a devoted *Satyagrahi,* the analyst is trained to induce a particular suffering, one that is in service of consciousness. It is an *active* activism designed to consistently, persistently, and nonviolently mediate, confront, and break down the violent inner other who rules the patient’s ego, occluding the inner potential embedded within the shadow complex. Without nonviolent activism the ego lives on an island alone, for pacifism reflects the ego’s lack of connection to the unconscious world.

Gandhi and King agreed that consistent activism was the key to a nonviolent revolution. If one had to act violently, this was a better alternative than pacifism (King, 1958; Gandhi, 1957/1962). Jung (1954c) also warned the analyst against a passive resistance to evil when working with the unconscious. “Like doctors who treat epidemic diseases, we expose ourselves to the powers that threaten our conscious equilibrium and we have to take every possible precaution if we want to rescue not only our own humanity but that of the patient from the clutches of the unconscious” (para.182). The analyst’s nonviolent position encourages the proliferation of consciousness through the bridging of the patient’s ego to their unconscious world, moving the patient from an attitude of “passive nonresistance to evil to one of “active nonviolent resistance to evil.” Each consultation lays bare the destructive archetypal master/slave pattern and utilizes nonviolence to flip the inherent power dynamism into a relational paradigm defined by an inner democracy of truth and self-love.

King’s second tenet reveals that ***“Nonviolence does not seek to defeat or humiliate the opponent but to win his friendship and understanding”*** (King,1958, p. 90). Racism itself is about the marginalization of a person or group of people according to their group identification. Racism is fundamentally about oppression. King defined one nonviolent elixir to oppression as *Agape*. *Agape* is a nonsectarian, nonreligious, unifying principle that dissolves the calcifying effect of the power instinct intrinsic in human relationships by way of humanitarian love. “*Agape* is a love in which the individual seeks not his own good, but the good of his neighbor. *Agape* springs from the *need* of the other person—his need for belonging in the same family” (King, 1958, p. 93). In the analytic process, the analyst does not seek to “win the friendship of the patient” but does seek to join with the patient in an understanding of a shared humanity. A shared mutual human reality binds the clinical couple through kinship libido which provides the foundation of trust necessary to withstand the violent upheavals from the unconscious intruding upon the patient’s conscious life. For King, *Agape* does not mean an unconditional understanding and love for all men, “for it would be nonsense to urge men to love their oppressors in an affectionate sense” (p.92), but it does represent a mutual respect for all of human life.

King’s *Agape* is similar to Jung’s idea of kinship libido, or our desire for human connection. Jung states that kinship libido lies at the core of the transference and “is impossible to argue away, because relationship to the self is at once relationship to our fellow man, and no one can be related to the latter until he is related to himself” (1954c, CW 16, para. 445).

In analysis, specifically within the transference, nonviolent consciousness appears in service of the self through protests called unconscious enactments. And, although at times the very nature of these enactments may contain shaming or humiliating elements, they are an inherent aspect of the enactments, or the master/slave archetype; they do not emerge from the analyst’s ego-seeking dominance. Indeed, It is through kinship libido, or our common humanity, that the analyst builds trust with the patient. The analyst’s goal is to restore order to the patient’s threatened inner state of democracy, which has become defined by a one-sided ego driven attitude. The analyst restores the one-sided life to balance through the implementation of tactics of noncooperation or boycotts. Boycotts could be expressed through many forms of language; albeit physically (not speaking), emotionally, not responding and at times even disagreeing with destructive patterns through bearing the unbearable truth with the patient. King speaks of this tactic as moral shaming:

The nonviolent resister (the analyst) must often express his protest through noncooperation or boycotts, but he realizes that these are not ends themselves; they are merely means to awaken a sense of moral shame in the opponent. The end is redemption and reconciliation. The aftermath of nonviolence is the creation of a beloved community while the aftermath of violence is tragic bitterness (King, 1958, p. 90).

To “awaken a sense of moral shame in the opponent” is to awaken the patient from their unconscious life through the doorway of consciousness. The power of *Agape* allows for the violent forces of consciousness to be known in both participants and co-creates the “beloved community” to which King refers.

In 1965, of the 15,156 blacks in Dallas County, Alabama, only 156 were registered to vote (Archives 1962). Thus, King chose Selma because it was the perfect crucible for the transformation of America’s racist split, for Selma had all the ingredients: a small southern town that contained a corrupt political system, a minority white population with a racist mentality whose rage was only a hair’s breath away from exploding. And, lastly, King knew that Selma would capture the attention of the national press, which symbolized the lens of consciousness from which the new collective psychic position would emerge. He also brought to Selma tremendous gravitas. Whereas his title as a Nobel Laureate, peace activist, and his people’s Moses brought him international acclaim, his personal suffering and physical brushes with death endowed him with the role of suffering savior and shaman-healer. King also embraced the necessary and transcendent role of the archetypal trickster. These qualities would be sorely tested in Selma, but after the challenges of the Montgomery bus boycotts and the Birmingham riots, King was ready.

The tactics King implemented to bring consciousness to the South were familiar to the marchers, for King had borrowed those tactics from the slave myth of Uncle Remus and from its central characters, Brer Rabbit and the Fox. These characters were unconscious extensions of the inner master-slave pattern projected into stories of humor and aggression. The marchers’ transgenerational trauma had been integrated for generations through the use of myth, which not only maintained ancestral connection through narrative, but conveyed messages of wit and resiliency in the face of extreme suffering. In their article Transgenerational transmission of trauma and resilience: a qualitative study with Brazilian offspring of Holocaust survivors, authors Braga, Mello and Fiks (2012) contend that the methods of communication utilized by survivors on subsequent generations of family members, “has a significant impact on the manner in which members of the second generation (and beyond) integrate their parents’ traumatic experience into their lives…The presence of an open, loving communication style enabled creation of symbolization mechanisms, which, in turn, favored resilient outcomes” (p.4). Again, Braga, Mello, and Fiks cite results of their transgenerational study on trauma:

The use of linguistic resources, such as jokes and comic tirades, enables a peculiar approach to the traumatic experience: while it makes the issue easier to address, it simultaneously serves to denounce the violence experienced. In these cases, humor may be viewed as a sort of symbolic displacement, at once allowing the survivor to present and repudiate the traumatic experience without distancing himself or herself from it, creating something of a cushion to lessen the impact of traumatic experience (p. 4).

Humor and suffering weaved within myth and song allowed mostly uneducated slaves, who could not read or write, the capacity to mediate suffering with each other, as well as the means to record, preserve and protect their heritage. Moreover, myth and song provided a format from which slaves could communicate to each other through codes embedded in a unique language white slave masters did not understand. These capacities to overcome suffering through subtle and obvious forms of manipulation and trickery unwittingly provided an outlet for the Civil Rights marchers in 1965, when trickster tactics became the central psychological tool of the movement.

Malcolm Gladwell, in his book *David and Goliath* (2013), discussed the Civil Rights marchers as tricksters who changed history through utilizing tactics familiar to slaves, whose victimized position in their relationship with the master forced them to be creative with their resources as a means of channeling their aggressions and manipulating their oppressors. King implemented tried-and-true slave tactics to trick the white man and get him to “tip his hand” (Gladwell, 2013, p. 181), thus revealing the white man’s shadow side and entrapping him in his own destructive tendencies. As Gladwell stated,

At the center of many of the world’s oppressed cultures stands the figure of the “trickster hero.” In legend and song, he appears in the form of a seemingly innocuous animal that triumphs over others much larger than himself through cunning and guile…Among American slaves, the trickster was often the short tailed Brer Rabbit. “De rabbit is de slickest o’ all de animals de Lawd ever, made, He ain’t de biggest, an he ain’t de loudest but he sho’ am de slickest. If he gits in trouble he gits out by gittin’ somebody else in” (2013, p. 171).

In one poignant tale Brer Rabbit falls into a well. As Brer Fox passes by, Brer Rabbit entices Brer Fox into the trap: “Git ‘long ‘way f’om here. Dere aint’t room fur two. Hit’s mighty hot up dere and nice an’ cool down here. Don’ you git in dat bucket an’ come down here” (Gladwell, 2013, p. 171). Of course, the bait works, Brer Fox capitulates, and as he descends Brer Rabbit waves goodbye, escaping the trap. Herein lies the roots of victory for the oppressed.

In *Dark Symbols, Obscure Signs: God, Self, and Community in the Slave Mind*, Earl Riggins, Jr. describes the trickster character of Brer Rabbit as the champion for the oppressed whose questionable antics inform “…what might be characterized as the ‘ethical gap’ created when the conventional boundary between right and wrong is intentionally confused or reversed by the oppressed” (2003, p. 149). It is only in creating the ethical gap that the oppressed are able to get the attention of the oppressor, which is the prerequisite for moral discourse. This ethical gap requires the oppressor to become a partner with the oppressed in redefining ethical norms and values (p. 149). Whereas the archetypal master-slave relationship is ruled by oppression, violence, and dependency, its compensatory shadow is the dream, in this case, the image of freedom, the architect of new psychic life. Little did the slaves know that generations later in 1965 their dreams for a life of freedom would be redeemed in keeping with the trickster myth as the cantilever to escape the well.

In the Birmingham riots the menacing Bull Connor became the target of the movement’s animus, and in Selma, King endowed the role to Sherriff Jim Clark. Clark was just the kind of person the movement needed to demonstrate the paradigm of racism as the marchers had experienced it for so long. King homed in on Clark and planned to capitalize on his combativeness. Indeed, the trickster needed a Fox to lead into the well.

King’s third tenet statesthat ***“Nonviolence is directed at the forces of evil rather than the persons who happen to be doing the evil”*** (King, 1958, p. 91). The marchers confronted the sheriff and his posse with sit-ins that involved praying, singing, and silent meditations, all in an effort to confront the evil living within the other. Dr. King referred to the elimination of evil as something that must be exorcised via consciousness and that cannot occur if the nonviolent resister takes violence personally. According to King, if the resister,

is opposing racial injustice, the nonviolent resister has the vision to see that the basic tension is not between races. The tension is, at bottom, between justice and injustice, between the forces of light and the forces of darkness…We are out to defeat injustice and not white persons who may be unjust. (King, 1958, p. 91)

In the analytic setting, the condemnation of evil is at once powerful and complicated. For the analyst, the nonviolent stance is directed at the toxin contained within the projection, rather than against patients. As patients work to find themselves through the relationship with the analyst, their inner resistances build and the inner suffering master/slave paradigm projects out and onto the analytic relationship. If the analyst cannot suffer the patient’s aggression while subsequently working to peel back the projection, the analyst/fox becomes trapped, drawn into the well by the patient/rabbit’s passive aggressiveness. In doing so, the analyst risks reinforcing the master/slave paradigm, by identifying with the aggressor and becoming violent themselves. Refusing to take on the projection involves condemning the evil, not the person. In this way, instead of evil eclipsing the personality, it is at once moved into the background, bringing to the foreground the mutual humanness of each party. Patients can then choose, or not, to come to terms with their own trickery for their ego is now left without a means to cathect its shadow contents. The choice of consciousness, or what comes with it, in this case, the awareness of one’s own destructive hatred, induces organic suffering integrating ever so slightly the nonviolent activist within.

The Civil Rights movement in Selma demonstrated that focusing on the forces of evil rather than the persons committing the evil acts shifted the psychic energy from the personal, physical world, to the collective, transpersonal world. In so doing, the marchers metaphorically turned their attention, one event at a time, to the archetypal world that carried the affective experience of ancestral suffering. As the focus shifted, the weight of the transgenerational trauma rose within the marchers. The pain transformed the energy into image and was then broken apart by a conscious demand for change from the forces that created the suffering. The demands for change were conducted in demonstrations which unconsciously enacted the transgenerational master-slave traumas. The enactments induced collective shame and moral outrage. The integration of shadow produced a collective reconciliation, a nonviolent movement towards peace. Consequently, the aggression was not just a passive demand for change but was an active nonviolent stand for justice for hundreds of thousands of Negroes existing in an archetypal world devoid of time and space.

The analyst is the mediator between the objective carnal and spiritual worlds of the patient. In one hand, they hold the personal while otherwise tending to the unconscious, archetypal images manifesting from the patient’s psychic reality. Addressing the forces of evil, or unconscious material, is complex because the unconscious undergirds everything and rises to consciousness through the psychic viaducts of projections, dreams, and fantasy. If the analyst cannot dissolve the projections of the patient through nonviolent activism the analyst risks becoming the projection, and the patient consequently remains stuck in a world of a faulty belief system; specifically, the belief that the evil is coming from the other. They are not freed from their inner world of victimization. The analysis enables the analyst to focus on the forces of evil rather than seeing the patient as evil. The analyst’s ability to hold *Satyagraha* and *Ahimsa* are critical to this tenet. Steiner, who also cites the work of Hanna Segal and Wilfred Bion, reiterates:

The analytic attitude (Segal, 1967) can be considered as one where the analyst allows himself to receive projections and, as far as possible, refrains from action. Instead, he attempts to replace action with thought, and when he is able to understand what is being communicated by the patient, he is able to verbalize the thought as an interpretation (Bion, 1962). If the analyst is the recipient of difficult projections, the accretions of stimuli that build up within him may be too difficult to think about. To varying degrees, containment fails, and a partial acting out by the analyst results (Steiner, 2011, pp. 84-85).

The varying degrees of acting out can be contained by the analyst through a related stance of vulnerability and empathy which is the only way to avoid the hierarchical instinct of the power paradigm. A stance against the power instinct serves as a constant boycott against the forces of the split and is the only solution to uniting the divided inner and outer worlds of the patient. Healing the split simultaneously unifies the patient’s and the analyst’s divided parts, while at the same time building a unified field in the collective from which the whole can emerge in culture.

King’s fourth tenet is ***“The Nonviolent resister is willing to accept violence if necessary but never to inflict it”*** (King, 1958, p. 91). The marchers met at the church in Selma and trained for the violent encounters they were to experience with their oppressors. For the African American protestors, this must have been an exceedingly painful process, for they had to consciously suffer through the master/slave enactment for the sake of a nation’s conscience. King was a master strategist and did not underestimate the power of timing and the role of the news media. The media itself symbolized emerging consciousness. The camera’s capacity to capture the timeless image of the suffering slave turned the tables on the collective as if to say, “Do you see what your hatred is capable of?”

According to King, Gandhi stated that “Suffering is infinitely more powerful than the law of the jungle for converting the opponent and opening his ears which are otherwise shut to the voice of reason” (King, 1958, p. 92). Through nonviolent suffrage and the news media’s *reflective* conscious-bearing function, new moments of meaning and meeting paved the way for a softening of the calcified complex of racism. In analysis, a parallel process ensues through the analyst’s evocative nonviolent nature.

The analyst’s capacity to hold the patient’s shadow projections serves as a form of nonviolent consciousness designed at once to forge an opening into the patient’s psyche, while concomitantly introducing the analyst to an unknown prism of darkness within herself. The analyst’s capacity to accept violence is directly related to her own capacity to accept the existence of an inner sadistic master. The capacity to hate the patient is real and enlivened when this contagion is not acknowledged, nonviolently contained and metabolized. Without this alchemical procedure, the analyst gets drawn into the well by her own inner trickster/rabbit, thus risking acting out aggressively upon the patient. It is gut-wrenching work, but with the analyst’s refusal to violate herself spiritually, the patient may learn to do the same. The analyst must work hard to remain in a healthy masochistic position. A healthy masochistic position is one of taking on suffering to avoid a violent dual with the patient. Steiner describes how the violent dual develops. Holding a position of suffrage, the analyst is able to slowly turn the mirror onto the patient. A dawning awareness unfolds, and the patient (hopefully) begins to awaken to their sadism thus, seeing that the perpetrator lives within and not without. Gandhi expressed poignantly that violence only begets violence. Practicing *Satyagraha*, the analyst bi-passes this possibility: “Real suffering bravely born melts even a heart of stone. Such is the potency of suffering…*there* lies the key to *Satyagraha*” (Gandhi, 1962, p. 79). The analyst understands this kind of violence and is prepared to go to jail *as the bride groom enters the bridal chamber*, understanding that in the folds of the conflict lies coniunctio.

King’s fifth tenet is ***“Nonviolence avoids not only external violence but also internal violence of spirit”*** (King, 1958, p. 93). As the marchers refused to be physically violent, they also trained to avoid spiritual violence through the nonviolent tactics of the sit-in, prayer vigil, singing, silence, publicity, and jailings. The tactics were subtle but psychically powerful in breaking through the psychological defenses of the law enforcement officials. Some broke down in tears, and at one-point the sheriff had to be hospitalized with chest pains (Fager, 1974). Their sufferings were indications that something was shifting within the individual and cultural splits.

In analysis, a similar process unfolds, whereby the analyst conducts nonviolent tactics of the sit-in (holding the tension of opposites), singing (exploring breakthroughs), praying (holding of hope), silence (refusal to collude), jailings (suffering of projections), and publicity (making the unconscious conscious) in an effort to avoid damaging the patient’s spirit with their negative countertransference feelings. The analyst challenges the patient’s victimized ego position, the negative inner master, thus introducing the patient to the roots of his or her own evil. While this process causes violent eruptions within the ego, it does not damage the patient’s spirit, only enriches it.

When King discussed the essence of this tenet, he referred to avoiding “violence of the spirit” as being one’s refusal to propagate hatred. He returned over and over again to the notion of *Agape* and the insistence that hatred met by hate only reinforces evil and disintegrates the bonds of love in a relationship and the building of community (King, 1958).

In analytical psychology, the analytic stance requires that the analyst consciously hold the tension of opposites while not engaging in personal attacks, for personal assaults only guarantee a violence of spirit to both the analyst and the analysand. The analyst listens carefully to the inner voice of the patient, for it is through communication with this inner voice that the defining neurosis of the patient presents itself. The inner voice has usually been active for quite some time creating a turbulent, violent inner attitude which has negative and self-destructive effects upon the patient’s outer world. According to Jung (1954-b),

The inner voice is the voice of a fuller life, of a wider, more comprehensive consciousness…What the inner voice whispers to us is something negative, if not evil. The inner voice…makes us conscious of the evil from which the whole community is suffering, whether it be the nation or the whole human race. But, it presents this evil in an individual form, so that one might at first suppose it to be only an individual characteristic (para. 318).

The transformation of the inner malevolent voice to one of compassion involves nonviolent strategies designed to induce consciousness. Although the implementations may be psychically painful, they ultimately serve the development of spirit and encourage the unfolding of the true personality.

Three days in the Selma movement symbolized pivotal psychic shifts in the collective zeitgeist as the government and the civil rights marchers began to synthesize into one movement and shared purpose. These historical nodal points are Bloody Sunday, Turnaround Tuesday, and the final five-day march to Montgomery.

With each march and subsequent broadcasting of events, the lens of consciousness began to widen as evidenced by the outbreak of demonstrations across the country. The centripetal force of the archetypal trickster had created an opening in the collective dialogue around the moral injustices of racism. The boundaries were being shifted as a new definition of democracy was forming. However, what would become the Voting Rights Act of 1965 would not materialize without the sacrifice of life. The deaths of Jimmie Lee Jackson and Reverend James Reeb surrounded the marchers of Bloody Sunday and Turnaround Tuesday. After the funeral of Jackson, a synchronicity outside of the Torch Motel in Marion, Alabama, led to the image of the march from Selma to Montgomery by way of the dream that emerged from James Bevel, a colleague of King’s.

Bloody Sunday was the first attempt to march to Montgomery from Selma. However, the march would be thwarted, for upon breaching the crest of the Edmund Pettus Bridge, the marchers were attacked, gassed, beaten, and forced back to the church. By the time the marchers stood on the far side of the Edmund Pettus on Turn Around Tuesday, March 9, 1965, they found themselves standing in the eye of the storm, calm and filled with a singular purpose, seemingly unaffected by the surrounding cultural and political furor over their progressive nonviolent movement. President Johnson, fearing more deaths and violence in Selma, issued a federal injunction forbidding King to march. In so doing, King became ensnared in a moral dilemma that would pull him from all sides, for pressure to defy the government’s order had grown bellicose. For his people to achieve true freedom King needed to rely on the very forces that had entrapped the black man for centuries—the government, the symbol of America’s patriarchy, its lawful and libertarian authority. You see, until Turnaround Tuesday, King had run the movement in accordance with the laws guiding his conscience.

Later, on *Face the Nation* King defended his decision to march:

There are two types of laws. One is a just law, and one is an unjust law. I think we all have the moral obligation to obey just laws. On the other hand, I think we have moral obligations to disobey unjust laws because non-cooperation with evil is as much a moral obligation as is cooperation with the good. (Meet the Press, 1965).

Johnson asked that King avoid more violence by refusing to march to Montgomery. King refused. Johnson sent his top aide, LeRoy Collins, to Selma to negotiate with King. He vowed a nonviolent response from law enforcement if King and the marchers would turn around on the bridge. King again refused and retorted, “But Mr. Attorney General, you have not been a black man in America for three hundred years” (Garrow, 1986, p. 402). Collins refused to give up and in a last-ditch effort negotiated a deal with the law enforcement waiting on the opposite side of the bridge. They vowed that if King would turn around on the bridge, they would not harm the marchers. According to several sources, King’s trickster-like responses to Johnson’s plea via Collins was varied. “Some say his response (to Collins) was noncommittal—perhaps a simple smile” (Garrow, 1978, p. 88). Charles Fager, in his book *Selma, 1965*, stated; “There is uncertainty as to whether Dr. King explicitly agreed to go along with this plan or not, but it appears that he did” (1974, p. 102). Nick Kotz, in his book *Judgment Days* (2005), referred to King as stating that he did not know what his people would do; that the actions of one man could not dictate the movement of thousands: “I cannot agree to do anything, because I don’t know what I can get my people to do. But if you will get Sheriff Clark and (Colonel) Lingo to agree something like that, I will try” (Kotz, 2005, p. 294). And yet, before leading the marchers to the bridge King exclaimed the opposite to the demonstrators: “I have got to march. I do not know what lies ahead of us. There may be beatings, jailing’s, tear gas. But I would rather die on the highways of Alabama than make a butchery of my soul” (Kotz, 2005, p. 295). No one, not Leroy Collins, and maybe not even King really knew what he would do on the bridge that day.

King, flanked by high-ranking officials in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, and religious leaders from around the country began the second attempt to march to Montgomery on Tuesday, March 9. Upon reaching the far side of the Edmund Pettus, the marchers were faced with a sea of blue State Troopers blocking their way. King halted in front of the troopers and after singing “We Shall Overcome,” asked if he and others could kneel and pray (Kotz, 2005; Fager, 1974; Garrow, 1978). A period of silence ensued. King rose from his knees and then turned around to lead the group back to the church. “Just as they turned, however, the line of troopers that had been blocking the highway suddenly withdrew to the side of the leaving it wide open (to Montgomery). Indeed, “If there was a secret script for the confrontation (by law enforcement) the state then violated the agreement,” (Fager, 1974, p. 104). “As newsmen and nervous federal officials looked on, however, each successive rank of marchers followed those in front and turned back across the bridge” (Garrow, 1986, p. 404).

In the *Book of Symbols* (Archive for Research in Archetypal Symbolism, 2010), the bridge is the symbol of the spiritual union: “Psyche appears to support the separation of conscious from the unconscious, but also a bridging that brings them into creative relationship” (p. 626). By walking across the bridge and holding a meditative, prayerful vigil, King was neither breaking a law by marching nor cooperating with evil by not marching. He simply held the tension of not knowing what to do, and by that action bridged what, until that moment in time, were two splits in culture. Both sides won. The African American won the support of the government, and the law enforcement officials, choosing not to retaliate, won the support of the nation. The moment of silence on the bridge ushered in a new paradigm, a creative act engendered by the collective unconscious. The supplication by all parties on the bridge indicated that a shift in consciousness had occurred on both sides. The officials did not subscribe to violence, and the marchers could not rely on their usual tactics of trickery to get the white man to tip his hand. On the bridge King had committed trickery “against his people,” not against the white man. By defying a court order, he potentially alienated himself within the movement, simultaneously compromising his position as the hero and negotiator with the government. By turning around on the bridge, King created acrimonious feelings from within both the SNCC and SCLC. Strung up by both sides of the movement, King’s image of the hero faded, and his suffering for a collective idea transformed into the image of the martyr.

Intra-psychically, the events on the bridge revealed that a peeling back of projections had occurred, an acknowledgement that both master and slave lived within and without, the archetype shining dynamically from all sides, infusing humility into a collective state of hubris.

In analysis, this bridging brings the analyst and patient to an equal footing with each other, an awareness of a shared common humanity, where hatred falls away and is replaced by *Agape,* or love. In his book *Strength to Love,* King exclaims:

All men are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied to a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be, and you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be (1963, ix).

It is in the state of oneness that the analytic couple experiences the Self’s unfolding through a bridging, a perception of something greater than their egos at work in the world. King refers to this as “justice.” His sixth tenet dictates that ***“Nonviolence is based on the conviction that the universe is on the side of justice”*** (King, 1958, p. 93). The archetype of democracy collectively experienced through the Selma marches was emblematic of the transcendent function—the synthetic relationship between conscious and unconscious realms moving toward wholeness. King’s idea of justice, then, is based on the notion that nonviolence and violence are two sides of nature, their hermeneutic relationship leading to outcomes of consciousness.

Turnaround Tuesday ushered in a series of events that paved the way for the marchers to wind their way to Montgomery. President Johnson, who had worked tirelessly behind the scenes for new voting rights legislation, had sacrificed the support of many southern supporters in his endeavors to align himself with the movement. It was serendipitous that Johnson himself was a southerner and a carrier of the cultural complex of racism in the South, for this fueled his compassion for the movement and his determination to pass voting rights legislation.

The President’s full support of the movement was evidenced in a series of national speeches advocating for the rights of the demonstrators and their wish to march to Montgomery. King would later tell the President, “It is ironic, Mr. President, that after a century, a southern white President would help lead the way toward the salvation of the negro” (Kotz, 2005, p. 314). Johnson and King now sat on the side of a great dream for all men: the right to be counted as equally important in the eyes of the government, and the chance that, through a vote of democracy, one man’s voice might set the stage to change a nation.

Within a few weeks, the movement was granted access to Montgomery, and the legislation was drawn up by Johnson for the passing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. On March 21, the marchers set off to the Edmund Pettus Bridge for the last time, with King wearing around his neck a lei, Hawaii’s state flower, indications of a dream still to come in the image of the first African American President, Barack Obama.

The crossing of the bridge represented the ushering in of a new zeitgeist. The few carriers of consciousness who began their journey at the beginning of the movement in the 1950s had reached the crest of the Edmund Pettus Bridge, with multitudes beyond measure, people of all colors, also becoming carriers of consciousness, numbering in the hundreds of thousands across the country. James Hillman (1988) discussed the importance of one’s ability to develop consciousness, as an elixir for the development of culture:

You see, these individuals with insight into their own actions, who are aware of the operation of the opposites within themselves, have, to a greater or lesser extent, experienced the coniunctio. Such people, then, are conscious carriers of the opposites. And, to the extent that such individuals exist and carry the opposites within themselves, they do not feed the exteriorization of the terrible strife between the opposites (Hillman, 1998, p. 325).

As the bridge signifies the union of opposites in a racially divided nation, so it represents the intrapsychic communion of the conscious to unconscious forces within patients. No longer do the violent waters of hatred hold the same meaning and power because our patients have become aware of their part of the problem. As analysts we help them see that they must now participate in their life through the implementation of nonviolent principles.

As our patients walk metaphorically from Selma to Montgomery, they are shown the landscape of their past and see and feel the new ethic that is guiding them. Through their relationship with their analyst, our patients begin to dialogue with their dreams and wanderings, uncovering new meanings, which lead them to a richer, more meaningful existence, because they have learned that they do not walk alone. There is the Self, whom the patient has come to experience by way of the analyst. The analyst, who was once the conduit to the Self, has released the reins to the patient, and the patient has learned to trust the Self to communicate with him or her instead of the analyst.

Throughout the lifespan, the ego will continue to challenge the Self’s call to order. It is on the bridge between the Self and other, the collective and the individual, where our unique purpose is born. This process will continue for the remainder of our life, with the call to consciousness being the North Star.

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