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## Citizens for Peace Minutes 3-9-10

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## CITIZENS FOR PEACE

### Minutes

**March 9, 2010**

The meeting opened at 7:00 pm with a welcome by President, Colleen Mills. She introduced member, Lynda Herman who led us in an inner peace meditation. As our meeting tonight is based on nonviolent practices, she told us about the word, AHIMSA, that is 3000 years old, meaning nonviolence. She shared a selection about holding that word close and also read from the Tao, the 31<sup>st</sup> versa, modern version by Dr. Wayne Dyer telling us to carry AHIMSA in our hearts.

#### **Special Presentation:**

Colleen introduced member, Ann Abdo, who reminded us that we are in the Season of Nonviolence, which runs from January 30<sup>th</sup> to April 4<sup>th</sup>. She then introduced us to the works of Gene Sharp, and how he developed a strong penchant for social justice. Gene Sharp became a scholar activist, attending OSU and Harvard. He then founded the Albert Einstein Institute.

Member, Sally Peck, addressed the group and shared information about the Albert Einstein Institute, where Gene Sharp developed a booklet, "From Dictatorship to Democracy". This booklet was condensed from 900 pages to 88 pages and is used by numerous countries around the world to teach nonviolent practices. Gene Sharp showed how nonviolence can be more effective than violence – but there's a proper way to hold nonviolent protests.

Member, Denise Salaam Marisco, led the group in presenting an outline of how to approach change via nonviolent means, taken from Gene Sharp's booklet, "There are Realistic Alternatives". The main areas of this practice are:

- **Grand Strategy**

1. The overall concept which guides/coordinates/directs all resources (economic, human, moral, political, etc.) of group/nation to obtain objectives in conflict.
2. Set basic framework for selection of more limited strategies for waging struggle.

- **Wise Strategies Include:**

1. Accurate sense of context to wage struggle
2. Identifies where one is / wants to be
3. Assesses impediments/facilitators to achieving goal
4. Assesses strengths/weaknesses of opponent
5. Assesses merits/limitations of potential courses of action
6. Selects viable course among viable options / selects new course
7. Identifies overall plan of action

- **Strategy** – Conception of how best to achieve objectives in conflict

- **Tactic** – Limited plan/course of action based on conception of how best to use available means to achieve restricted objective as part of a wider strategy.

- **Method** – Specific means of action within a technique of nonviolence. Actions are ways of conducting protest, resistance and intervention without physical violence.

1. Nonviolent protest/persuasion: Symbolic acts expressing opposing opinions
2. Noncooperation: Nonviolent actions that express deliberate restriction, discontinuance or withholding of social, economic or political cooperation

Each table/group was given cards with actions. The balance of the meeting was spent by each group discussing/determining three nonviolent actions that would be beneficial for the Citizens for Peace to pursue. All top actions were shared with the entire group to determine where we should focus our efforts.

**Treasurer's Report:** Rick Abdo summarized the current Treasurer's report.

#### **Announcements:**

- Colleen shared details of the Midwest Regional Conference, to be held in our district May 14-16. Please help in any way you can as we help host this event.

Colleen thanked all in attendance for coming this evening.

The meeting closed at 9:00 pm.