

SPEAK PEACE IN A WORLD OF CONFLICT

WHAT **YOU** SAY NEXT
WILL CHANGE **YOUR** WORLD

Marshall B. Rosenberg, PhD

Bestselling Author of *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life*

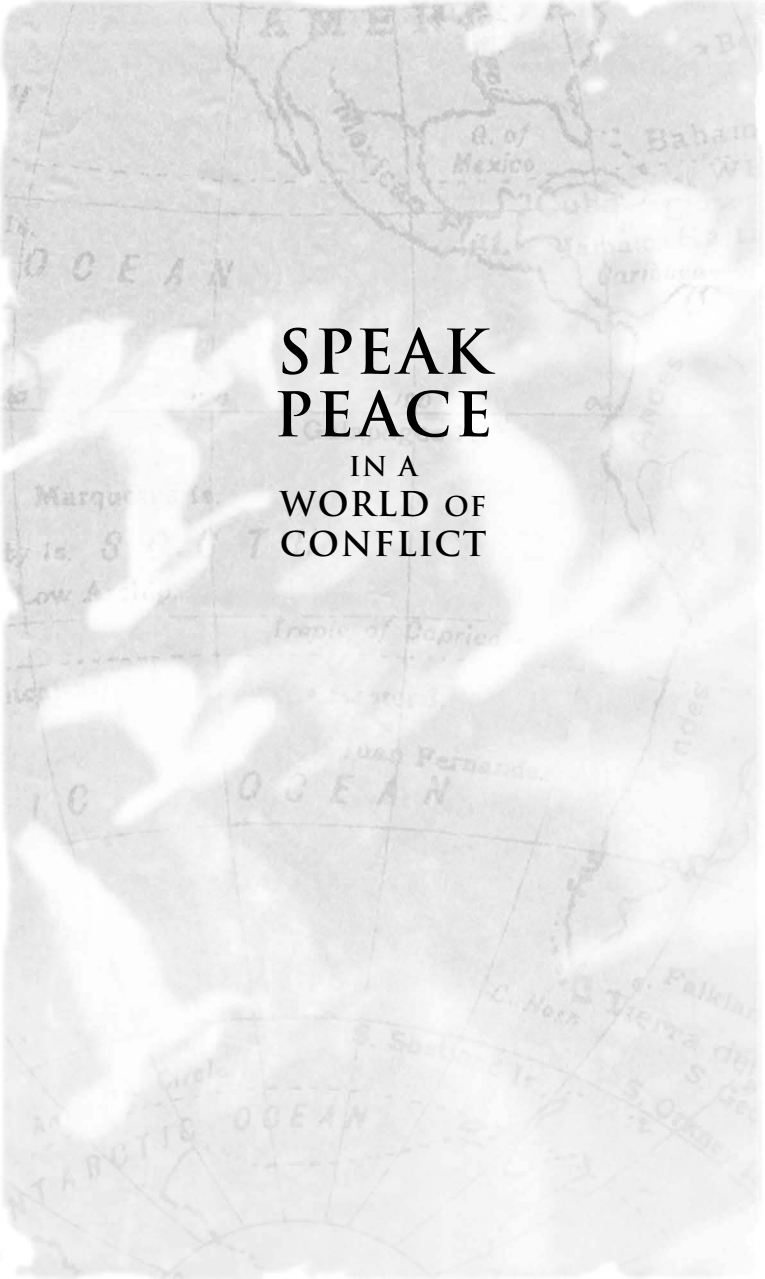
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by Marshall B. Rosenberg, PhD



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Speak Peace in a World of Conflict:
What You Say Next Will Change Your World

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Praise for Speak Peace in a World of Conflict

“*Speak Peace* is a book that comes at an appropriate time when anger and violence dominate human attitudes. Marshall Rosenberg gives us the means to create peace through our speech and communication. A brilliant book.”

— ARUN GANDHI, president, M.K. Gandhi
Institute for Nonviolence, USA

“*Speak Peace* sums up decades of healing and peacework. It would be hard to list all the kinds of people who can benefit from reading this book, because it’s really any and all of us.”

— DR. MICHAEL NAGLER, author, *America Without Violence* and
Is There No Other Way: The Search for a Nonviolent Future

“*Speak Peace* is set apart from the fine body of literature on the subject of nonviolence by its fundamental intimacy with the complexities of human nature. Rosenberg brings us globally critical evidence that how and what we speak reflects who we are and embodies what we will become.”

— DR. BARBARA E. FIELDS, executive director,
The Association for Global New Thought

“Many books on communication are strong on theory but impractical on application. Marshall Rosenberg’s instant classic is the stand out exception. It is clear and compelling in its logic and flat-out inspiring in its inviting exposition of usable techniques and strategies. If enough people read this book, the world will transform.”

— HUGH PRATHER, author, *The Little Book of
Letting Go, Shining Through, and Morning Notes*

“*Speak Peace in a World of Conflict* offers a gift of spirit, theory, and nonviolent communication experience from which every seeker of peace within and without can learn. It complements John Burton’s *Deviance, Terrorism and War* as a guide to mutual need-fulfilling processes of problem-solving to realize nonviolent conditions of global life.”

— GLENN D. PAIGE, author, *Nonkilling Global Political Science*;
founder, Center for Global Nonviolence

“*Speak Peace* demonstrates how we can make our deepest yearnings for a harmonious world come true. Through stories and exercises, this book shows us simple yet subtle practices for creating peace—internally, externally, and institutionally. If you want to do your bit to create a happier world, get fluent in this process!”

— DIANA LION, associate director and prison
program director, Buddhist Peace Fellowship

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FOREWORD

DOROTHY J. MAVER, PhD



SOUND IS A POWERFUL CREATIVE AGENT. OUR SPEECH REFLECTS our thoughts and perceptions, defining the world in which we live.

It is through our speech that we are known, for it tells a story of our thought life and essential self. How we speak can open or close doors, heal or hurt, create joy or suffering, and ultimately determines our own degree of happiness.

When I first heard Marshall Rosenberg speak peace, I knew I had been introduced to a man with a vision and the courage to act on that vision. As he shared his humorous and profound perspective and real-life stories about how lives were changed because everyone's needs were met, he affirmed what I already knew in my heart. It *is* possible to live in right relationship with one another and all life.

In this time of pain and suffering in our world, Marshall gives us a key. This key unlocks the gift of understanding as to how our use of speech impacts and influences our lives and the lives of others. He offers concrete examples, a depth of knowledge, and a plethora of tools to bring harmony through conflict in any situation where there is willingness to participate.

Evaluating a Nonviolent Communication Workshop for political activists, a participant shared the relief and hope experienced as anger shifted and resolved. In the past, her

angry way of communicating had kept her from being an effective political activist and change agent.

As we learn to speak peace in a world of conflict, we transform the world we live in, becoming a cause and not simply an effect. Our speech helps create a world that works for everyone, a world in which we understand and live the concept of Nonviolent Communication. Living intentionally in this way our motivations are transformed, and we come to know what Marshall means when he says, “. . . actions are taken for the sole purpose of willingly contributing to the well-being of others and ourselves.”

Speak Peace is so much more than a self-help book. You will come away from this book knowing how to participate effectively in personal, social, political, and global change. This book is excellent and so needed at this juncture in our evolution. Peace begins with each one of us. Thank you, Marshall Rosenberg, for a significant contribution to building a Culture of Peace.

— DOROTHY J. MAVER, PhD
*is Executive Director of The Peace Alliance and
The Peace Alliance Foundation, educating for
a Culture of Peace and advocating for a U.S.
Department of Peace. www.ThePeaceAlliance.org*

FOREWORD

DAVID HART,

Washington, D.C., July 2005



AS I SIT DOWN TO WRITE THIS FOREWORD ABOUT THE importance of Nonviolent Communication, the world is still reeling from the bombings on the London subway on July 7, 2005. We awoke to learn that “it” had happened again. We saw the sights and heard the sounds of violence and felt a deep personal connection to those who were suffering and whose loved ones are suffering still.

Somehow, across the miles that separate us from the site of the bombings, we grasped the pain that violence brings. Once again we saw the reality that bombs destroy fragile human forms and rip apart lives of valuable human beings. Though distance could provide a cushion to the shock, instead, in Washington, D.C., and throughout the United States and the world, we sensed the crushing power of fear.

As I celebrate the tools of Nonviolent Communication presented in the work you hold in your hands, I wonder what it will take to truly “speak peace in a world of conflict.” The violence that shocked us on July 7, 2005, is all too common, too familiar, too much a part of our lives. Sometimes we recognize our connection to those who are affected by this pandemic of violence. Mostly, we seem to go numb—unable to either feel the pain of violence or the beauty of our shared humanity.

The day before the London bombings, lives were ripped apart in Baghdad and Fallujah. We participated in this violence, but we failed to mourn those victims or to ask when it will end. We only tend to notice if those whose lives are snuffed out prematurely are seen to be “like us.” If they wear the right uniform or look “like us,” we recognize our common experience and see them as fully human. If not, we may fail to grasp the value of their lives.

In this important book, Dr. Rosenberg reminds us that, “we’ve been living under this destructive mythology for a long time, and it comes complete with a language that dehumanizes people and turns them into objects.” Moreover, he offers us a suggested path out of this darkness. He reminds us that what you say and do matters. Our actions and our failure to act in the face of growing violence shapes the world and determines our future.

In my position with the Association for Conflict Resolution, I have the great pleasure of working with skilled professionals who strive every day to help people resolve conflicts in a manner that is creative, constructive, and does not resort to violence. As practitioners in the expanding and vital field of Conflict Resolution, our members recognize conflict as a natural and healthy part of life. We would never seek to eliminate conflict, because we believe that conflict can help us grow as individuals and as societies. Instead, we seek a more effective response to conflict. Dr. Rosenberg offers us a creative approach to communication in a world awash in violence.

I celebrate the pragmatic visionaries who seek a better world and work every day to bring that world into being. Through our collaboration, we may just find a path that brings us from the darkness of violence to the light of peace. Dr. Rosenberg has added his thoughtful voice to an important conversation. His approach is insightful, provocative, and is

sure to spark discussion. While his presentation doesn't exactly match my approach, that is not the point. He would not want simple agreement. He wants to engage us in a vital dialogue that allows us to look within and ask ourselves what role we can play in making the world a better place.

Nonviolent Communication is part of the solution to the problems we face today. As I brace myself to enter the subway here in Washington, D.C., I am strengthened by the work of Dr. Rosenberg and those like him all around the world who are not willing to accept the status quo of violent responses to conflict.

Read this book, take its message to heart, and let it be a step in a lifelong journey of self-discovery and peacemaking. Together, bit by bit, word by word, day by day, we can truly "Speak Peace in a World of Conflict" and by so doing we can build a brighter future.

— DAVID A. HART

*is Chief Executive Officer of the Association
for Conflict Resolution (ACR)*

(Title for identification purposes only, not endorsed by ACR)