

Roots of Relationships: Five Foundations for Nonviolent Living Syllabus

Wednesdays, 9:00 - 10:30 am / Summer

MAB2

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Course Description

Roots of Relationships is based on a lesson Mahatma Gandhi taught to his grandson Arun Gandhi, who later shared it with students around the world. Gandhi taught that before violence becomes physical, it often begins quietly in everyday behaviors, which he called passive violence. Through discussion, reflection, journaling, and dialogue circles, participants explore the five roots that sustain healthy relationships: Love, Respect, Understanding, Appreciation, and Acceptance. The course offers practical tools for recognizing and transforming passive violence while strengthening relationships in daily life and community.

Week	Topic	Notes
Week 1	Week 1 Speaker/Course Introduction and Dialogue Circle	Overview of Mahatma Gandhi's teachings and the Roots of Relationships. Introduction to passive violence and the Nonviolent Tree. Participants begin reflective journaling.
Week 2	Week 2 The First Root of Relationship – Love -Video & dialogue circle discussion	Exploring compassion and empathy as foundations for nonviolent living. Video and group discussion.
Week 3	Week 3 The Second Root of Relationship – Respect	Understanding dignity, equality, and honoring others in everyday interactions. Dialogue circle discussion.
Week 4	Week 4 The Third Root of Relationship – Understanding	Exploring listening, awareness, and seeing. situations from multiple

		perspectives. Dialogue circle discussions.
Week 5	Week 5 The Fourth Root of Relationship – Appreciation	Recognizing the value of others and cultivating gratitude in relationships. Dialogue circle discussions.
Week 6	Week 6 The Fifth Root of Relationship – Acceptance	Learning how acceptance strengthens relationships and reduces conflict. Dialogue circle discussions.
Week 7	Week 7 The Curve of Conflict	Exploring Arun Gandhi’s Nonviolent Tree and how passive violence in everyday behavior can escalate into conflict. Introduction to the Curve of Conflict and discussion of ways to recognize and transform conflict before it escalates. Dialogue circle discussions.
Week 8	Week 8 Dialogue Circles and Nonviolent Communication	Using dialogue cards to practice respectful conversation and deep listening.
Week 9	Week 9 Applying the Roots of Relationships in Daily Life	Participants share selected reflections from their journals and discuss how the Roots of Relationships can be applied in family, community, and social environments. Dialogue circle discussion.
Week 10	Week 10 Reflection and Integration	Group dialogue, reflection on learning, and discussion of how participants will continue applying the Roots of Relationships.

Course Description

- **Seeds of Light Workbook and Journal (Required)**

Students will write in the journal each week as part of the reflection and dialogue exercises used throughout the course. <https://www.gandhiforchildren.org/seeds-light-publications/>

- **Available on Amazon**

<https://www.amazon.com/Seeds-Light-Planting-Kindness-Compassion/dp/B0B1B1N8MV>

<https://www.amazon.com/Seeds-Light-Living-Journaling-Legacy/dp/B09XSS7GV7>

- **Instructor Provided Materials**

Gandhi dialogue cards used to facilitate dialogue circles

Short essays and reading handouts for class discussion

Additional video selections featuring Arun Gandhi will be shown throughout the course to illustrate the teachings that inspire

Peace Tree Planting Montessori Project

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R_mOqPezcWU

Peace Tree in Sharpeville

<https://www.catalysthouse.net/lynnea-on-south-africa-news/>

*Content/order/classes/speakers subject to change if necessary.