

*on a movement without 'ism' / nonviolent protest / marching together /
preaching love / 1+1=1(-1) / needing to*

with **Elnatan Ariel**
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*an ongoing collective exploration / learning from experiences of togetherness and uncertainty / reflecting on listening – with Elnatan Ariel, Matteo Zoccolo – 26 april 2021
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EA: So, I find that communicating is an important key lesson for an individual to be able to broaden their perspective. We gathered together in a fashion of, “There’s nothing else to do except for meeting with each other and talking about the big world problems, now this global pandemic.” Talking about much, much bigger things that will be there after the pandemic is over, makes us, as a group, become sort of in charge of this little movement we’re creating. There’s no ‘-ism’ behind the movement, but there are a lot of individuals behind it. It’s not even individualism that’s backing it up, it’s a group of individuals that created it and made this... How to call it?

MZ: Space?

EA: Space, the shared space that makes it possible for everyone’s opinion to be heard, shared equally without any judging, without any prejudice. We can’t be attacked because we said something that might hurt or differ in a personality or an opinion from another person on the other side of the world. We’re here to just say, “This is who we are. If you like my opinion, if you like my point of view, my perspective in the world... You can interpret it however you like.” I call it a nonviolent protest because words on paper are the least harmful way of communicating, especially when it’s in a semi-protest vibe. We’re obviously not protesting any specific subject. We’re crying out our points of view, and we’re saying, “We should be heard!” At least on some level, even if it’s just a random person picking up the magazine. And that little protest is a very nonviolent protest. I’m in the middle of listening to a book about Gandhi at the moment. Reading sorry, not listening, reading a book about Gandhi by Louis Fischer, someone who is a writer and journalist that went to meet Gandhi a few times. He goes through the different steps that Gandhi went through to get to where he got to as a guru, or whatever it is. So, in the process of me getting to know Gandhi, and also me getting to know the 1+1=3 group, I’ve found similarities in terms of nonviolent protest, in terms of a march – we’re all marching together towards a goal.

MZ: That’s very new to me.

EA: We’re all trying to figure out this final redemption kind of song. We’re all figuring out this, “What is real, what is connecting to the individual, to us, to the one who is writing?” On another level, I do think that our act of continuation of meeting for periods of time, shows how much we do stand for the same cause. In Gandhi’s march for the salt, they started on one side of India and marched all the way to the ocean, where the salt is produced. And during those 20 something days of marching, they started collecting a big, big group of people. And even though for us time is very slow, we will be with a very, very big group of people. Because as long as we still march, in a year or two years, the group will grow, the protest will grow, the nonviolence will become the main topic, the part of the

protest that is important to remember. In the end, we can be heard. We are a very small voice, but we can be heard for multiple different purposes.

MZ: You said it too well, I don't have any questions now.

EA: Super! That was about Gandhi, but if you want, I'm personally really in trouble with figuring out love. Because as a human, we're full of all different emotions. And to be human, you have to be full of all these different emotions. So, I accept that I feel sad, depressed, happy, relieved, all these different things, together, at the same time, as one human.

MZ: So, you're feeling different emotions and...

EA: I feel everything at once, which means I'm alive. But to be able to just find the inner... I've been listening to Ram Das for the past two years. He comes from a Jewish background, from a scholar and a Ph.D. background, and he became a semi Buddhist kind of guru in America. He found himself basically preaching love, saying that to love everything is to find peace, inner peace, to find all these different things in one's self. Like, if you find calmness in everything and if you accept that you feel all these things, and you're able to love and accept yourself, and love others, only then you're in bliss. You're in... In some form of safe haven, even though you're still on Earth. This has nothing to do with the $1+1=3$ group necessarily. This is more me as an individual within the group. But if we, as a group, work together on this united love... Because we all feel things, and it's very clear that we're all feeling things in the magazine. But if we all just preach the love, If there's violence and we just preach love to violence... Not in terms of like, "We love you, violence." but we need to show love where there's evil, to be able to make it neutral.

MZ: So, yeah, $1-1=4$.

EA: The thing is: $1+1=1-(-1)$. I learned that because I wanted it to be $1+1=1-1$. But that's not good enough. You need to look at the effort. There's minus and another minus because it's so much more, it's so much more than just showing love to evil. There are two minuses there. It's so strong. And there's one plus, that needs to fight off these two minuses. And it equals. So, I think that there's this funny analogy for a way to look at a person who loves compared to the people who don't. It just takes one person like Gandhi to come up with this idea of nonviolent protesting. 15 years after he died, his ideas came to be. He died without accomplishing anything or accomplishing a lot, but without accomplishing what he wanted to at the moment. At the moment of his death, he was still in the works of getting India liberated from England. So, there is a bit of a contrast between how one person can do this, but even how, when he's dead, the light, the love is still there, and it's so much there that people took over and continued showing it,

continued preaching it, and continued working towards the goal.

MZ: That's great.

EA: That's a nice summarization of how maybe Hindu and Buddhist and generally... I would say even a little bit of a religious aura can be used to look at it. But it's not a must. It can be used. These people come from religious backgrounds. Gandhi, Ram Das... And therefore they look at the world the way they do. I think that I'm like that too. I grew up religious. But I mean, as a non-practicing religious person, as a non-practicing Jew, now, after eight years, I know that's not my calling. And after almost 10 years of not practicing, I know that my call is something bigger than me. I can't put my fingers on what it is. It's not just because I woke up this morning that I live. That's my point. I don't know why I'm alive, but I am. I'm thankful and I need to learn to love more, I need to learn to love myself more, and I need to... I need to. I just need. And that's OK because we're all human and we have needs.

MZ: Beautiful.

EA: Toda Raba. It's a heavy morning, uh?

MZ: It's 8:30, I just woke up, actually.

EA: What's inside your coffee? Why don't you have the same energy that I do?

MZ: Yeah, the thing is that I didn't have a coffee yet. Maybe I should!

EA: Yalla.