Lesson Ten

They show us that collectively, we make the world. Understanding how we make the world – how it could be made or understood differently – is the road toward realizing our full human potential. It is the road to true freedom.

HOW WE MAKE THE WORLD

A HERO'S GUIDE TO POWER

Over 2 million people marched in a procession over 5 miles long, mourning the loss of Mahatma Gandhi in January 1948. He was not the holder of any high office or rule over vast lands. He had very little money and few possessions. He preferred to wear sandals and a simple white cloth that he made himself. He did not command vast armies. He had none of the traditional trappings of power as we normally think of it, yet he was a man of tremendous power. He swayed millions with his writings and actions that helped free India from British rule and would ultimately inspire hundreds of millions of others throughout the world to find their own inner strength and power to throw off the shackles that bounded them. The fight for civil rights in the United States, the struggle against apartheid in South Africa, the fight to overthrow a brutal genocidal dictator in Serbia, and the struggles for democracy in the Middle East all bare the imprint of his inspiring actions and

revolutionary philosophy of power. When Time magazine listed the Top 100 most influential people of the 20th Century they listed him number two. Only the discoverer of that massive power of atomic energy, Albert Einstein, was deemed more influential. Einstein himself noted of Gandhi, "Generations to come will scarcely believe that such a one as this every in flesh and blood walked upon this earth." A multiple Academy Award winning film made over 30 years later would recount that he had "become the spokesman of all mankind. He made humility and truth more powerful than empire."

Gandhi may have become an extraordinary public speaker and powerful revolutionary, but he did not start out that way. He actually liked being part of the British Empire as a boy, and set off for London at age 18 to study law. He came back to India a lawyer, wearing a fine British suit, but completely froze up in his first courtroom case and struggled to find work after that. Two years later he received an offer to do legal work in South Africa.

It was in South Africa that Gandhi would find his call to adventure. He was shocked by the racism against Indians in South Africa. One night he purchased first-class ticket for the train. A white passenger complained, but Gandhi refused to move. He was forcibly thrown off the train at a remote station. As he sat alone on the train platform that night he vowed to fight the "disease of color prejudice" no matter what the cost.

Using his knowledge of the law and writing skill, Gandhi was able to draw international attention to the plight of Indians in South Africa. More importantly, he started to discover a new way of thinking about power, and new ways of fighting back against a might power like the British. When the British declared that Indians would have to register and carry passes

at all times, Gandhi called a meeting and convinced the people not to fight back with force but to simply not cooperate with the British law. Over 95% of Indians heeded Gandhi's call and refused to register. Later they made a dramatic public showing of their protest, burning over 2,000 registration certificates in a public bonfire.

Gandhi was experimenting with a revolutionary idea of power. His idea was that power is not "held" by those in power. Rather it is "given" by those who are not in power. If the people refuse to cooperate, the power ceases to exist. At that point, those in power are required to use force, but Gandhi saw that if he and his fellow Indians could stand with dignity as they received the blows, those giving the blows would hurt more than those receiving them, for it would awaken their hearts to the injustice of their actions.

These revolutionary ideas had their roots in ancient wisdom – the Hindu doctrine of ahimsa (non-violence) as well as the Christian notion of turning the other cheek. Gandhi was reading widely in world religions at the time and was especially inspired by Leo Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God is Within You*. Tolstoy believed that when you turn the other cheek and receive the blows of an enemy, you are also turning their hearts, awakening them to the truth that all people and things are worthy of dignity and respect.

Tolstoy explicitly applied his ideas to the case of India in "A Letter to a Hindu" which Gandhi published in his own newspaper. In that letter, Tolstoy refers to the fact that India had been settled by the British East Indies company when he notes, "A commercial company enslaved a nation of two hundred million people." He goes on, with words that Gandhi would later repeat as especially striking to him, "What does it mean that 30,000 men – not athletes but rather weak and

ordinary men – have subdued 200 million vigorous, clever, capable and freedom-loving people? Do not the figures make it clear that it is not the English who have enslaved the Indians, but the Indians who have enslaved themselves?"

Gandhi saw in these words a confirmation of his own intuitions about the true nature of power. And he found in Tolstoy's message about the way non-violence could awaken one's enemies to truth a powerful method. He called the method Satyagraha, Sansrkit for "holding firmly to the truth." Gandhi himself defined it as "the Force which is born of Truth and Love."

The method of becoming a Satyagrahi is the journey of the hero. Like the hero, the satyagrahi must overcome their fear to face up to the brutalities of power. They have to put aside their own desires for their own material well-being. Free of ego, they receive the ultimate boon – a sense of connection to the world, deeper understanding and clarity, and a resolve to share this boon with others, living for something bigger than themselves.

Returning to India, Gandhi brought the Satyagraha method with him and called for peaceful protests and strikes to protest unjust British laws. In response, the British implemented martial law, forbidding people to gather in large groups. On April 13th 1919 over 1,500 men, women and children gathered in a large walled garden to celebrate a traditional Punjabi festival. British troops moved into the arena and started firing without warning. Official counts by the British reported 379 dead and over 1,000 wounded, but later investigations suggest much higher casualties. General Dyer, leader of the British on that day, reported that 1,650 rounds had been fired. Nearly every one of them hit a man, woman, or child.

Gandhi was beginning to show the world that there was more than one kind of power, especially in a world that was growing increasingly connected by a vast communications network of telegraph, radio, and newspapers. The British clearly had the upper hand in terms of economic power and physical force. Political Scientist Joseph Nye would later call these coercive forms of power, "hard power." But Gandhi also recognized another form of power, the capacity to influence others and shape their ideas, what Nye would later call "soft power." What Gandhi came to realize was that these two forms of power do not necessarily work together, and in fact when a regime with great hard power exercises that power without good reason, they can lose soft power. In studying Gandhi's methods, Gene Sharpe would call this effect a form of "political jiu-jitsu" in which the strength of an opponent could be used against them by generating soft power.

After the massacre Gandhi turns firmly against the British and becomes fully committed to Indian independence. He started to recognize the economic power Britain held over India by extracting cheap raw materials and cheap labor, and providing a large market for British-produced commodities such as fine clothing. Gandhi gave up all British goods and took to the loom to fashion his own simple clothing, calling on others to do the same. Long before Eric Wolf would come up with the term "Structural Power" Gandhi was beginning to recognize the power that could be embedded in a structure and was finding ways to strike back.

His most impressive strike against the structure came in 1930 when he decided to simply not cooperate with the British laws prohibiting the collection and sale of salt. Gandhi saw this as a perfect representation of British structural power. The march started off modestly from his home 240 miles from the

coast where he would collect the salt. He stopped in each town along the way to speak about his plan, and thousands upon thousands joined in the march. By the time he reached the beach, he was surrounded by tens of thousands. He picked up the salt, breaking the unjust law that held Indians back from harvesting their own abundant natural resource and declared, "with this salt, I shake the foundations of the British Empire." The action inspired millions of Indians to protest and over 60,000 are arrested, including Gandhi, but not before he could arrange for his satyagrahis to march on the nearby salt works factory.

The satyagrahis marched toward the salt works as if it belonged to them, unarmed and unflinching. Webb Miller, a United Press reporter, stood witness as the police turned violent against the quiet and calm protestors. "They went down like tin pins. I heard the sickening wacks of the clubs on unprotected skulls." His report was published in over 2,000 papers and read in the US Senate.

Sensing the inevitability of Independence, Gandhi was invited to London to discuss terms. The breakout of WWII delayed the process, and Gandhi was imprisoned many more times as he became more and more resolute that Britain must "Quit India." Finally, in 1947, Independence was granted.

Gandhi's methods and the story of his success spread throughout the world. There was a growing recognition that power can be resisted through dignity and non-violence. Martin Luther King would call Gandhi "the guiding light of our technique of nonviolent social change." Gandhi's vision of awakening a recognition of the truth of human dignity through the force of love lived on through non-violent protests all over the world. "There is something about this method," King said, "that has power. They try to handle it by throwing us in jail.

We go into the jails of Jackson, Mississippi and transform these jails from dungeons of shame into havens of freedom and human dignity."

HOW WE MAKE THE WORLD

Beyond Gandhi's remarkable and revolutionary revelations about the nature of power was a deeper insight: *We make the world*. He understood that the world is nothing more or less than the sum of all of our interactions. He used the power of "seeing big" to understand that the world he lived in was formed by a vast history of larger structural and global forces. He saw the structural power that shaped his circumstance and understood the history that created that power. He also used the power of "seeing small" to understand how we make the world through even our smallest actions. His refusal to wear British clothing, or picking up a lump of salt, these seem like small gestures, but he understood that even small things are manifestations of larger structures and that he was indeed shaking the foundations of the empire.

Gandhi was very well-read, but he also knew that he could not just think his way into a new way of living, that he would have to live his way into a new way of thinking. From an early age he started engaging with what he called "experiments in truth," which became the title of his remarkable autobiography. These experiments are not unlike our own 28 Day Challenges or the Unthing Experiments we did earlier in this class. From an early age he experimented with different foods and lifestyles. And throughout his life he experimented with giving up foods, British clothes, and even sex as he continually experimented with his mind and body, working his

way toward a deeper understanding of himself, his body, and the world. As he remade himself he grew in his understanding of how to remake the world, for if the world is nothing but what we make of it, we are the first that must change.

Gandhi understood that the world around us is largely invisible, like the water the fish is swimming in, but his daily practices allowed him to make his assumptions fragile and see the world with new eyes. Such renewed vision opens up new possibilities for envisioning a better world. Philosopher Maxine Greene calls this the social imagination, "the capacity to invent visions of what should be and might be in our deficient society." She goes on to explain that "there must be restlessness in the face of the given, a reaching beyond the taken for granted."

This is nothing short than a prescription for what David Foster Wallace called "real freedom," When we ask deep and hard questions about our own biases and assumptions, see big to understand where they come from, and see small to understand how they shape our everyday lives we are then set free to re-imagine them, and to re-imagine what is right, true, and possible.

A HERO'S GUIDE TO RE-IMAGINING WHAT IS RIGHT, TRUE, AND POSSIBLE

Throughout the 20th Century, Black South Africans loved to hate the South African rugby team. It was a White Man's sport in a White-dominated country. Apartheid South Africa was a form of extreme segregation in which white cities were completely separated from black settlements. Blacks were

required to carry a pass to enter any white area. Blacks were extremely impoverished while Whites lived in relative luxury. At rugby games, blacks were not allowed to sit in the bleachers. They had to stand behind a fence, far from the action. But from there they could loudly and boisterously express their frustration with the system and the people oppressing them. They did not cheer for the South African Springboks, the national team. They cheered for their opponents. "Every time they beat up one of the white guys we would shout for joy," recounts Justice Bekebeke, a black political activist. "These people who humiliated me every day – me and my parents – the same thing they visited on us, they got it on this rugby field." For white South Africans, the Springbok emblem was a point of honor and pride, a sacred symbol. For blacks it was a mark of oppression and hate.

This was the world Nelson Mandela discovered when he first came to Johannesburg in 1941. This was the world in which what was right, true, and possible were defined. Like Gandhi, Nelson Mandela had been born into an outpost of the British empire and would dedicate his life to freeing his people. As a child he was sent to the best schools and groomed to be a tribal leader of the Thembu. But in 1941 he traveled to Johannesburg to avoid an arranged marriage and found a deeper calling as he encountered the brutal reality of racism in apartheid South Africa.

In the footsteps of Gandhi, Mandela helped transform the African National Congress (ANC) into a non-violent resistance movement using strikes, boycotts and non-cooperation to fight for the end of apartheid and full citizenship for blacks. As part of this movement, thousands of protestors gathered in Sharpeville to burn their registration passes, just as Gandhi had done over 50 years before. The

protest grew to nearly 20,000 people. The police moved in to arrest a protestor. A scuffle broke out which quickly escalated into violence and at least 69 protestors were killed, including 10 children.

This marked a dramatic turning point in South Africa's history. Protests broke out all over the world in support and solidarity with the protestors. The international community distanced themselves from South Africa. The massacre was condemned by the United Nations.

South Africa responded by doubling down, banning the African National Congress as an illegal organization. Any future protests, or even the mention of the ANC would be enough to qualify as a terrorist and immediate arrest.

This is where Mandela diverged from Gandhi's path. He had hoped to break the chains of apartheid in South Africa by using non-violence. But in the wake of this brutality he thought there were few people outside of South Africa who were willing to really do anything about the plight of black South Africans. Would Americans help? They were still struggling for civil rights themselves. So Mandela formed a more militant organization. Though he never resorted to deadly violence, he led a group that bombed electrical stations and other key infrastructural targets.

For these acts, he was arrested and sentenced to life in prison on Robben Island. While in this island prison, Mandela's fame grew. His wife Winnie organized a massive campaign for his release that spread around the world. Celebrities and rock stars took up the cause. Massive international boycotts were arranged against South Africa. The most effective were those blocking South Africa from participating in international rugby competitions. The white's beloved Springboks had nowhere to go. Springbok Manager

Morne Du Plessis would later recount that "those young people that stood up against us so many thousands of miles away ... they changed their role in changing this country."

Under this intense international pressure and unrelenting black protest, the South African government finally agreed to free Nelson Mandela after 27 years of imprisonment. Blacks were elated. His freedom meant that they too would soon be free. Many whites were terrified. *What would he do to get back at them for 27 years of imprisonment? Will there be civil war?*

Right-wing white nationalist took up arms, calling for a "white resistance struggle." When they tried to integrate schools, white nationalists like Koos Botha bombed the school.

Was it "*right*" for Koos Botha and others to bomb the school? Certainly not from the perspective that recognizes racial equality and the equal rights for all citizens regardless of skin color. But Mandela recognized that this was not the truth Botha and others, whites and blacks alike, were living by. If he wanted to build a new South Africa, he would have to change people's ideas of what is true and lead them toward possibilities they could not yet even imagine.

Mandela could see truths and possibilities that others could not. Twenty-seven years in prison had not made Mandela bitter with hatred. Instead of advocating a race war, he went to war on hate itself. "People must learn to hate," he famously wrote while in prison, "and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart."

Mandela was operating at an entirely different level as he worked toward opening up new truths and possibilities for people, and oftentimes this meant doing things that did not seem right, especially in a traditional sense of retributive justice

in which offenses must be punished. Instead, Mandela offered forgiveness to people for past atrocities in exchange for their help in building a better future. He even offered people like Koos Botha, the bomber of a school, spots on delegations to help pave the way toward reconciliation.

As Mandela worked to shape a new truth and sense of possibility he was especially aware of the power of symbols and rituals. He understood that for White South Africa, the Springboks rugby team was a core source of their pride. He negotiated with white leaders, offering to bring the Rugby World Cup to South Africa in exchange for free and open democratic elections.

Mandela won those elections and brought the World Cup to South Africa in 1995. Before the games could begin, black leaders met and agreed to scrap the Springbok emblem as it has come to represent the oppression and division of the past. Mandela rushed into the meeting to save the emblem. "His argument was basically, 'How can you call yourself leaders when these little symbols can actually lead us to war?'" The Springbok was saved and positioned with an official team slogan: One team. One country.

Later Mandela wore a Springboks hat to a political rally full of black supporters. They booed as he showed them the hat. Black activists like Justice Bekebeke who had also been imprisoned were full of hatred. They were outraged by Mandela's gesture. "Here is the man wanting us to reconcile with these brutish people who have humiliated us for ages in our own country," Justice Bekebeke explained. But Mandela was resolute. He asked them to support the team. "They are your pride," he implored. "They are our pride." Thousands cheered, but boos still echoed through the crowd. There was still work to be done.

None of the South African players had international experience at World Cup level due to the history of boycotts, but they were electrified as they entered the stadium for their first game. They were greeted by undeniable support from over 60,000 fans, white *and* black. "You didn't really understand how big this whole thing was until we saw that," Springbok player James Small recounted. "It was very tense. These people all of the sudden just flat out supporting us. We were coming from a scenario where a lot of people used to boo."

As the tournament host they had to play the reigning world champions, Australia. Australia had not lost a game in over a year. But the players were electrified by the support of their fans. "The players would have played until they dropped dead," Team Captain Francois Pienaar said, "They would have ran through any brick wall. There was a bond. There was a brotherhood." They won. Blacks and whites rushed the field together, celebrating a victory that shocked the world. A new sense of what is possible started to take hold.

After their victory, the team went to Robben Island to visit Mandela's prison home for 27 years. "It was an amazing experience. Standing in Mandela's cell," Team Captain Pienaar recalled. He remembers seeing the giant James Small standing in Mandela's cell with tears running down his cheeks. As Small himself explained, "to experience just for a few moments what a man experienced for a lifetime, and for him to be as forgiving as he was, I think made us all connect with emotions that," he cleared his throat as he searched for the words, starting to cry, "we were ... we were not ... we were being put on a pedestal to behave in the same manner."

The players recognized that they were playing for something more than themselves, and it showed in their

performance. They raced their way through four victories and into the final against the legendary New Zealand team with Jonah Lomu, one of the greatest players of all time and widely recognized as the first truly global superstar of rugby. New Zealand had been on an astonishing romp to the finals, including a record-setting 145-17 win over Japan, and no team had yet presented a serious challenge. Beating them seemed impossible.

Mandela arrived at the final in a Springboks jersey and encountered a roar of fans, black and white, chanting his name. "I couldn't believe it," former white nationalist Koos Botha explained, "I heard my people, the (white) Afrikaner people, chanting his name." Tokyo Sexwale of the ANC was equally amazed as he heard the crowd chanting, *"Nelson! Nelson! Nelson!"* "Here is Nelson Mandela," Sexwale says, "someone who should have been executed, in his blackness, in this white sport." His brave gesture to unite a country under such a controversial emblem had just the right effect.

The crowd went wild with support and enthusiasm. Desmond Tutu, the archbishop of the Anglican Church and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984, called it "an electric moment" and found himself wanting to wear the symbol himself. "Even a few months ago it was anathema ... a very divisive and ugly symbol." Tutu, wondered whether the symbol "could in fact have been magically used by God to weld us together," so strong was the sentiment produced by that moment Mandela arrived wearing the Springbok jersey.

Mandela seized the moment of pageantry to further his efforts to redefine what is right, true, and possible. He requested that the song of black protest, "Nkosi Sikeleli" (God Bless Africa) be combined with the old anthem used under White rule. The players were in full support and even tried to

learn the Xhosa words to the song, but on the day of the match they were overcome with pride and could not sing. "I just bit my tongue. I was just so immensely proud," said Team Captain Pienaar.

The South Africans were outmatched, but through sheer grit they managed to contain the giant Lomu and hold New Zealand to a tie at the end of regulation. First half of overtime: still tied. And then late in the second half of overtime with players near total exhaustion, Springbok Joel Stransky saw a little opening and drop-kicked for the lead. As Desmond Tutu described the moment, "When it sailed between the posts you waited to see where are the angels who guided that ball?" It was good, and South Africa held on for the win.

Black and white South Africans filled the streets, hugging and celebrating. "We didn't mingle with black people," Koos Botha explained, "We didn't touch one another. But that day set us free, we were hugging each other and saying what the show this was." Desmond Tutu was equally amazed, "Who would have ever imagined that people would be dancing in the streets of Soweto (a black township) for a rugby victory of a SpringBoks side. Oh get off it man. But they did!"

Even disgruntled black activists like Justice Bekebeke were changed by that day. "That's the moment I realized that this is our country. This is my country. This is a country for all South Africans." Bekebeke reflected on the hatred that had eaten him up inside for so long, "Hatred will get me absolutely nothing," Bekebeke realized. "It's going to make me a very bitter person, when there is so much to live for."

The foundation for this transformation of what is right, true, and possible was Mandela's ability to forgive those who had wronged him. His example allowed others to forgive as well. Working with Desmond Tutu he set up the Truth and

Reconciliation Commission to allow the whole country to go through the long process of grieving their losses and forgiving one another. Instead of a traditional war crimes tribunal, perpetrators of violence were allowed to give full confessions to their victims in exchange for amnesty. The emotional and cathartic proceedings were televised nationwide. "If we don't forgive them," Mandela urged, "then that feeling of bitterness and revenge will be there. Let's concern ourselves with the present and future, and to say that the atrocities of the past will never be allowed to happen again."

Then-President of the United States Bill Clinton applauded Mandela's remarkable ability to redefine what is right, true and possible and bring a nation together. "He did something almost historically unique," Clinton said, "It raised the prospect that people could be held accountable without being punished in the traditional sense. This is something virtually without precedent in humanity."

Where did Mandela find the strength and fearlessness that allowed him the clarity of mind to re-imagine what is right, true and possible? He was especially fond of the poem, Invictus, by William Ernest Henley, which he read aloud to fellow prisoners on Robben Island. The words strike at the core of what it is to be a hero by overcoming fear and living from one's own center:

Out of the night which covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.

Under the bludgeoning of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find me, unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.

The poem is the centerpiece of the Hollywood adaptation of the events I have just described. In one scene, Mandela hands the poem to Team Captain Pienaar to inspire his team to victory. I cannot find any reference to whether or not this actually happened, but Pienaar is fond of quoting another poem, this one from Guillaume Apollinaire, to describe the almost magical power Mandela inspired in him and his teammates:

'Come to the edge,' he said.
'We are afraid,' they replied.
'Come to the edge,' he said.
'They came, he pushed them, and they flew.'

A HERO'S GUIDE TO FEAR AND LOVE

In the 1800s, England was at war with Afghanistan. The Afghans were losing hope and running away. A teenage girl saw this, ran up to a mountain top and called out to the fleeing troops: "It is better to live like a lion for one day than to live like a slave for a hundred years." Inspired, the troops started to turn and fight, but the girl was shot and killed. Her name was Malalai.

When Ziauddin Yousafzai named his daughter Malala he may not have known just how much the life of his daughter would come to resemble the life of her namesake. He could not have known that she would also speak up in the face of great power. He could not have known that she would also be shot for her words. The school teacher just wanted her to be strong, educated, and good with words, so he allowed her to stay up late and talk politics even after her brothers had been sent to bed.

As our story begins, the hero and her father are standing on the Syrian border as refugees flee the country. Malala greets them, helps them find new homes, and works to make sure the young girls find a school, a sense of normalcy, and a sense of hope for a better future.

The refugees are fleeing the chaos of their country, which includes a rebel war, a brutal dictator willing to kill his own citizens, and the terror of ISIS. Syria, a country of 17 million, now counts 13.5 million of its citizens as refugees. Over 6 million of them have fled across borders like this one. Many of them remain in limbo, with no place to really call home, and few of the basic institutions and services that grant stability and

a sense of meaning and hope for the future. It is a terrible life, but it is better than the terror of living under ISIS.

How did ISIS come into being? And why do people continue to join ISIS? Scott Atran, an anthropologist, has been studying ISIS for years, trying to empathize with their position. It may seem unethical to empathize with a terrorist group, but Atran notes that there is a difference between empathy and sympathy. Empathy allows him to understand how they think without actually embracing that way of thought himself. This allows him to explore why they think that way, and consider ways that we can contain ISIS and keep them from recruiting more.

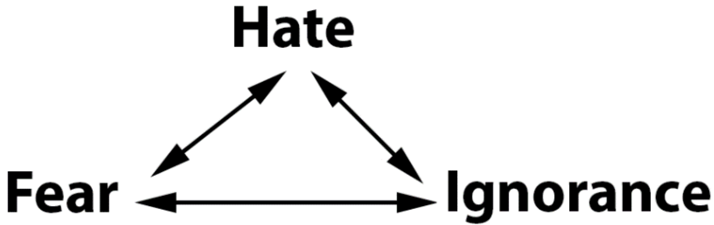
Atran uses the power of seeing big to look at the broader forces that brought ISIS into existence. Along with the instability brought by war in Iraq since 2003, the region also faced the worst drought of the past 900 years. This came at the same time that the region was shifting to more mechanized farming. Farms needed fewer workers and over 1 million people flooded into the cities of Syria where they could not find work. These economic factors had social impacts. Traditional tribal and family structures broke down. The gap between rich and poor intensified, and there was growing civil unrest. A civil war broke out in Syria in an attempt to oust their dictator Assad. Assad responded forcefully, bombing his own people.

Young people raised in these difficult circumstances saw no meaningful life path ahead of them. They had no career prospects and found themselves in a system that did not seem to care about them. Many of the young people who join ISIS were not actually Muslim before joining, Atran says. They learn about Islam through ISIS. It gives them a sense of meaning, hope, a job (to take up arms), and solves their crisis

of insignificance. When Atran asks them "What is Islam?" they respond simply, "My life."

ISIS recruits through slick videos and online magazines with high-production values. In their own words they make it clear that they want nothing less than an apocalypse. They hope to unite the Muslim world into the Caliphate and set the stage for the war of end-times. Their main magazine publication, Dabiq, takes its name from a city in northwest Syria where the apocalyptic prophecy says the armies of Rome will meet the armies of Islam.

In their own words, their immediate goal is "the extinction of the grayzone." They want the world to be clearly and strongly divided into black and white, Muslim and "Kafir" (unbelievers). They use terror to create fear, because they know fear breeds hate and ignorance. These are the dynamics of fear.



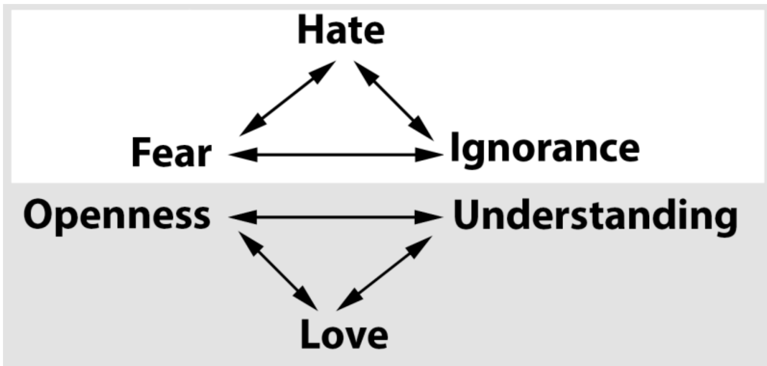
When we fear something we push it away rather than try to understand it, and so fear breeds ignorance, which itself breeds more fear, since we fear what we do not know or understand. We resent the fear and so we hate, further blocking our capacity for empathy and understanding. In short, the more you hate, the more you fear, the less you know and these three forces mutually create one another in a series of vicious interconnecting cycles.

ISIS has seen it work in the past. One ISIS article celebrates "the blessed operations of September 11th, as these

operations manifested two camps before the world for mankind to choose between." The same article goes on to demonstrate the effectiveness of the plot, not in how many it killed, but in how it inspired President Bush to align with their simplistic and ignorant vision of "us vs. them." They quote Osama bin Laden, "The world today is divided into two camps. Bush spoke the truth when he said, 'Either you are with us or are you are with the terrorist.'"

ISIS not only wants to bait non-Muslims into an apocalyptic war, they also want to create tensions that might inspire more Muslims to join them. They want moderate Muslims to feel uncomfortable around non-Muslims, to breed fear between them so that they push apart. In their manifesto called "The Management of Chaos/Savagery" they say they want "to motivate crowds drawn from the masses to fly to the region which we manage, particularly the youth."

Malala, our hero, understands this. She does not fight ISIS and the fear they represent by caving into fear, but instead stands up to fear with love, greeting refugees at the border and working to help create a meaningful and hopeful future for them. Malala has learned through a lifetime of encountering terrorism that we cannot fight terror by giving into fear. Instead, we can fight the dynamics of fear, ignorance and hate by engaging with any one of its points.



When we transform fear into openness we open the door for understanding, and the more we understand the more comfortable we become. The more comfortable we are the more we can open ourselves up to opportunities for connection and understanding. Just as there are dynamics of fear, there are also dynamics of love. Love nurtures understanding and openness. Fear nurtures hate and ignorance.

When she was a young girl, the Taliban started terrorizing Afghanistan and parts of Pakistan where she lived. Her father saw the Taliban as an enemy of Islam, hijacking the name of Islam, and he started to fight back, risking his life to speak out publicly against them. "Many people thought that if they speak they will be killed the very next day," he remembers. "I was beginning to think that if I didn't speak out I would be the most guilty person in this world."

As the Taliban gained strength the BBC sought to do a story about the life of a young girl under the Taliban regime. Her father brought her a small notebook and set it beside her, inviting her to participate. This was her call to adventure. She hesitated with fear, but then her mother reminded her, "It is

written in the Koran that truth has to come and falsehood has to die."

Her words would spread around the world via the BBC. Her words tell of her transformation from an ordinary schoolgirl full of hopes and dreams to living under a regime that does not allow her to go to school. Civil war breaks out as the military took action against the Taliban. With fighting everywhere, Malala became a refugee, moving from place to place with no home or school, no way to find a meaningful life. At a time when people were being found dead on the street for doing much less, Malala continues to write. She writes under a pseudonym for her protection, but her resolve strengthens over time and she begins speaking out on national television, exposing her identity.

She started to receive death threats but continued to speak out. Moving beyond fear and the desire for her own basic safety, this 14 year old girl even started calling out the worst of the Taliban by name on national TV. She was moving beyond herself and living for a higher cause, seeking rights and freedoms for all girls to go to school.

Malala became an international icon, a symbol of bravery in defiance of terror and fear. In the summer of 2012, the Taliban held a meeting and unanimously agreed to kill her. That October while riding a bus home after taking an exam in Pakistan's Swat Valley, a Taliban gunman stepped inside shouting, "Which one of you is Malala?" He shot her in the head.

The whole world that watched and waited as she lie lifeless in a coma for the coming days. Her plight brought intense international recognition to the issues she had been fighting so hard for. Over two million people signed a petition in support of the Right to Education Act in Pakistan, which was ratified

while Malala was still in the hospital, insuring that all children of Pakistan would be offered a free education.

Finally, after six days, she woke up. A month later she was able to sit up in bed, and after three months in the hospital, she walked out.

The death and resurrection of the hero marked her total transformation. In her first public address since the shooting, she was invited to the United Nations on her 16th Birthday. She addressed her transformation and the dynamics of fear directly. "The Taliban shot me on the left side of my forehead. They thought that the bullet would silence us, but nothing changed except this: Weakness, fear, and hopelessness died. Strength, power, and courage was born."

Her ultimate boon, her insight, is the recognition of love as the ultimate antidote to fear. This runs so deep that she does not even hate or fear those who shot her. Her father asked if she had forgiven them or if she felt angry, "No, not even as small as an atom," she said, and then added with the relish of a student who has recently mastered new knowledge, "or maybe the nucleus of an atom, or maybe a proton, or maybe a quark. ... Islam teaches us humanity, equality, forgiveness." She contemplated the wounds she had suffered, leaving her face slouching to one side and continued, "It doesn't matter to me if the left side of my face isn't working, or if I cannot blink this eye properly or I can't smile properly. It doesn't matter that I'm not hearing in this ear." She is simply grateful for her life and the opportunity to help others. "I have been given a new life, and this life, this life is a sacred life."

And this is why she is on the border of Syria, helping young girls find meaning in life. "There is a moment when you have to choose, whether to be silent, or if you are going to stand up."

Even simple gestures of openness and understanding can stop the cycle of fear, hate, and ignorance. It was fear that led Jason Ledger to wear a "F*ck Islam" shirt" and lead a protest outside of an Arizona mosque. But after the people inside invited him inside, he called off the protest and threw away the shirt. "Out of the respect for the Islamic people knowing what I know now," he said, "I wouldn't do that again because I don't want to offend or hurt those people."

ISIS continues to plot ways to inspire fear, hate and ignorance, but everywhere they meet resistance. The Paris terror attacks left 130 dead. But rather than turn to hate and fear, people took to the streets with signs reading "We are not afraid," and "Love wins." Antoine Leiris lost his wife, the mother of his infant son. His open letter to the terrorist is a beautiful reflection on the dynamics of fear, and his total denial to let fear, hate and ignorance rule his life.

Friday night, you took an exceptional life,
the love of my life, the mother of my son,
but you will not have my hatred.

If this God, for whom you killed so blindly,
made us in his image,
every bullet in the body of my wife
would have been a wound in his heart.

I will not give you the gift of my hatred.
You have obviously sought it,
but responding to it with anger
would be to give in to the same ignorance
that has made you what you are.

You want me to be scared,
to view my countrymen with mistrust,
to sacrifice my liberty for my security.
You lost.

Same player.
Same game.

I saw her this morning.
Finally, after nights and days of waiting.
She was just as beautiful as when she left on Friday night, just as beautiful as when I fell hopelessly in love with her over 12 years ago.

Of course I am devastated by grief,
I give you this little victory.
But the grief will be short-lived. ...

We are only two, my son and I,
but we are stronger than all the world's armies.
Anyway, I don't have any more time to waste on you.
I have to join Melvil who is waking up from his nap.

He is just 17-months-old.
He will eat his snack
like everyday.
And then we are going to play
like everyday.
And everyday
this little boy
will insult you
with his
happiness and freedom.

Because you do not have his hatred either.

EVERYDAY HEROES

In his recent commencement address at the Maharishi University of Management, comedian Jim Carrey reminded us that the dynamics of fear and love operate in every moment of our life. "Fear is going to be a major player in your life," he said, "but you get to decide how much. ... You can spend your whole life imagining ghosts, worrying about your pathway to the future but all there will ever be is what's happening here, and the decisions we make in this moment, which are based in either love or fear."

Perhaps we have all caught a little glimpse of what lies down the road of the hero's path. We have had moments of hope where fear fades away. For a brief moment we have that sense of connection, clarity, and conviction that allowed Martin Luther King to say in his final speech before being shot, "We got some difficult days ahead, but it really doesn't matter to me now, because I've been to the Mountaintop. I've seen the promised land." He was by that time living beyond fear and beyond even the most basic desire to preserve his own life. He was living for something much greater than himself. "I may not get there with you," he told the overflowing crowd. "But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the promised land." For that moment we feel that sense of connection that the heroes that have come before us talk about.

Most of us will not lead a movement like Martin Luther King. We will not lead a revolution like Gandhi, end apartheid like Mandela, or win rights for millions like Malala. But we will all have to face millions of decisions, some mundane and others momentous, and each time we will do so out of fear or love.

To find out how these decisions play out in everyday life, and how the lessons of this class might help in those decisions, I reached out to alumni of this class and asked them to share with me their own heroic journeys through life. I received letters back from all over the world.

One shared her journey out of fear and toward true love. She realized that she had fallen into an abusive relationship because she feared being alone. "It was my default to love myself through the eyes of men," she recalled. "I treated relationships as a safety net, holding me high above a pool of insecurity." It was like a spider's web, she said, and she was like a fly, "stuck there on my own accord ... smack in the middle while a spider consumed me."

She ended up in an extremely abusive relationship. "I lost hold of myself and ended up where I had been leading myself all along, existing as an object for him." She realized that the core of her fear that led to these poor decisions was the fear of being alone and unloved. She went to a very rural area for several months where she was forced to live with her loneliness. There she found that she was not afraid. She felt free to love herself, which freed her to love others rather than to simply be consumed by them.

Another former student shared how he had battled against the dynamics of fear and hate. He fell in love with a girl who had been in an abusive relationship. One night he had a dream and in the dream he could see ships burning on a lake.

"I watched a burning ship that represented her old boyfriend, who had abused her, sailing past other ships, catching them each on fire. Those ships would sail on and set fire to more ships, and so on. I watched as his ship pull alongside her and lit her on fire. They pulled up to me on my island and began shooting fire at me, and it seemed to me like it was the most important thing in the world that I not catch on fire, that I don't topple."

"Do people who are hurting spread the pain to others in an attempt to elicit empathy?" he wondered. "And does this create a cycle of hurting that spreads like a fire, like burning ships bumping into one another on a lake?"

He resolved to not allow himself to get burned, but she burned him. He tried to withstand the pain and let it dissipate so he would not spread the fire, but it only smoldered inside of him, ready to ignite into a raging inferno at any moment. She could see it inside of him. "She didn't think we could stay together," he said, and so "I told her that I wouldn't see her that evening. I was going to fight my demon."

He rode his bike out to the lake where they had camped together for the first time, and laid down on top of a hill. A massive thunderstorm moved in. "I was scared," he recalled. "That thing could really kill me ... 'You're nothing,' God seemed to whisper." But then the winds calmed and the sky opened up as he gazed up at the stars. "It really was the balance of infinity staring me in the face," he remembers. "The moon seemed so close. The stars became joined by strands of light, forming a beautiful web. The sky fell then rose, zooming towards me and retreating like the lungs of an animal." And this is when he had his revelation:

I somehow ended up kneeling back on my blanket, and the world collapsed inside of me. I saw myself. I knew myself. It was terrifying. I held myself before me, suspended in the air above me. Every piece of my

identity was evident. Every fabric of construction, every pride, stubborn impulse, and conceited motivation. Each piece of my ego swirled together and formed me, suspended in the air beside the full moon.

I was hugging myself in a child's pose and I remember crying out, almost screaming as I saw myself like never before. In horror. In awe. I saw me. I saw the pieces of me that were destroying me. I knew and understood. I also saw her. I saw hurt and love.

I took these things, these destructive aspects of myself which I had been too proud to recognize before, which was producing the pain within myself, and let them float into that yawning abyss above me. They were not bound by gravity, but by my ego.

I spent the entire night on that moon-bathed hill.

I learned that that my conflict was not coming from without, but from within myself, due to pride and stubbornness. I was able to let them go. It was painful and terrifying to look so deeply into myself, but I found that the source of my pain was within myself, not within her.

That night on the hill wrestling with myself was one of the most intense experiences of my life, but it worked. I'm currently in the healthiest, most fulfilling relationships that I can imagine. If I had placed the blame on the world around me and bolstered myself on my own ego, I would have collapsed, our relationship would have collapsed … we would have set fire to more ships.

As it is, we are able to pass our joy and loving relationship to others every day.

He ended his letter by recounting the lessons of anthropology that have become a part of his everyday life, his way of being the best human he can be. His ability to see big and see small allow him to empathize with others, and also to reflexively understand himself, the inner forces that drive him, and where they come from. "I would not be with her today if I had not made the basics of anthropology an integral part of

my life, my identity, and my way of thinking about the world," he concludes.

CONCLUSION
the raw, unfiltered,
falling-down-getting-back-up
beauty of everyday human life.

I would like to end the book with one last story from my former student Dean Eckhoff, now a FedEx driver in Denver. Or perhaps he is a musician. Or perhaps he is a writer. How does one define one's self? How does one define "success"? I will let Dean tell the story.

I began college with lofty, idealistic hopes and dreams about who I wanted to be, and how I wanted to change the world. I think at one point I convinced myself I wanted to be President of the United States. I do not regret those ambitions, but a little over halfway through college I began to realize (literally, make real) two things:

1. *The depth, breadth, and diversity of the tedious mess the world is in.*
2. *How I, personally, am a blatant, contributing part of the problem.*

I want to be certain that this is not seen as hopelessness, so I will clarify that these were very positive, grounding, and educational realizations…even if they felt kind of crappy at the time.

Sure, at the time, it was not fun to see how I not only had no real power to change the world in all the idealistic ways I thought I did, but was actually participating in reinforcing all the corrupt, irresponsible ways

people and our planet are being treated. That "downer," however, was very brief.

Through lessons learned in cultural anthropology and in life, and through my own desire, I began to discover a deeper, heart-level awareness: I may not have the power to change the world, but I have all the power to change and be responsible for myself and my own life.

Gandhi said it best, in regards to being the change we wish to see in the world, when he stated, "If we could change ourselves, the tendencies in the world would also change. As a man changes his own nature, so does the attitude of the world change towards him. ... We need not wait to see what others do."

I began to learn through my experience in cultural anthropology that my willingness to change myself might be simultaneously the ONLY and BEST thing I can offer the world; that challenging myself to be a healthy, responsible human might not only be incredibly beneficial to me, but also to those around me; that the world is just a reflection of its people, of me; that healthy, responsible individuals can create a healthy, responsible world.

The power part of this realization was that it applies to me, at all times, where I am at, and as I am! I didn't (and don't) need to have a lot of money, or incredible amounts of soft power, or an amazing ability to move millions with my words, or be the President of the United States. I can work on myself at any time, and choose to learn and grow and live and give responsibly in every aspect of my life, and in any given circumstance. In fact, I am the ONLY one who has the power to do that in my life.

From this realization came decisions, some rather hard and personal ones, which were (and continue to be) met with considerable criticism, even from those I was close to. However, the gifts I have gained from these decisions have been deep and personal and profoundly meaningful.

Through working on growing in relationships, finances, physical health, and other areas of my own life, I have met people and discovered

opportunities and done things I never would have dreamed I'd be able to in the past.

I was able to pay off my student loans, which turned out to be one of the most difficult, empowering, and educational endeavors I've ever faced (even more than, dare I say, getting my degree).

I have chosen to embark on a program that has helped me heal myself and outgrow cluster migraines, stomach ulcers, depression, and other debilitating illness, which was even more difficult and profound than student loans.

I have chosen to travel and challenge myself and place myself in uncomfortable territory to learn and grow and experience myself and the world.

I have been able to share my music at venues around Denver, and challenge myself to be vulnerable with music in front of people in new ways.

This only scratches the surface for me, but these and many other decisions gifts can be attributed back to that realization I gained through my experience at K-State, and most of all with lessons in cultural anthropology.

These decisions are not monumental. They are not going to upset any corrupt establishments, or end hunger, or create peace among the nations, or abolish modern forms of slavery, or create economic equality, or reverse the degradation of our beautiful planet and its resources. At least, I have a very hard time finding any correlation between these things and the decisions I have made. Singing cover songs in a Denver brewery doesn't exactly exude heroism.

I'm just a normal guy. I live a normal (pretty mundane, from a surface view) life. I am merely a human, learning how I can be the best (however flawed) human I can be, and make the most out of my life.

However, if I can help anyone around me, or anyone who allows me to share this with them, to discover within themselves the courage, freedom, creativity, empowerment, and love I have discovered by choosing to take back my life and take responsibility for who I am, I would like to.

I would like to, because it is the most meaningful (yet somewhat terrifying) experience I have had.

I would like to, because I my life means more to me than I ever thought possible, thanks to the decisions I've made and the people from whom I've learned.

I would like to, because these decisions continue to shape me into a healthier, more open person whose effect on the world will be at least a little more positive.

I would like to, because there is something redemptive about the raw, unfiltered, falling-down-getting-back-up beauty of everyday human life.

Challenge 10:
Your Manifesto

Your challenge is to write a manifesto for your life along with a visual work of art that captures who you are and who you hope to become. Together these create the perfect conclusion to a semester exploring the science of human beings and the art of being human.

Note that this is your "final exam" and should be a good representation of all that you have learned in the course.

Step 1. Imagine that the earth is a spaceship and to be on the earth you must be part of the crew. There is no room for passengers just traveling for pleasure. You have to apply to be on the ship.

Step 2. What position are you applying for and why? (In other words, what do you see yourself doing on earth?)

Step 3. Why is this position important? What core issues will it address? Give us some background on the issues.

Step 4. Reflect on each of one of the big ideas from this class (at least 1 paragraph per idea) and how those ideas changed the way you live or might help you in the future. As a reminder, here are the 10 Lessons:

1. *People are different. These differences represent the vast range of human potential and possibility. Our assumptions, beliefs, values, ideas, ideals – even our abilities – are largely a product of our culture.*
2. *We can respond to such differences with hate or ignorance, or we can choose to open up to them and ask questions we have never considered before.*
3. *When we open up to such questions, we put ourselves in touch with our higher nature. It was asking questions, making connections, and trying new things that brought us down from the trees, and took us to the moon.*
4. *Our most basic assumptions are embedded in the basic elements of our everyday lives (e.g. language, routines, habits, technologies).*
5. *We create our tools and then our tools create us.*
6. *Most of what we take as "reality" is a cultural construction ("real"-ized through our unseen, unexamined assumptions of what is right, true, or possible.)*
7. *We fail to examine our assumptions not just because they are hard to see, but also because they are safe and comfortable. They allow us to live with the flattering illusion that "I am the center of the universe, and what matters are my immediate needs and desires."*
8. *Our failure to move beyond such a view has led to the tragedy of our times: that we are more connected than ever, yet feel and act more disconnected.*
9. *Memorizing these ideas is easy. Living them takes a lifetime of practice. Fortunately the heroes of all time have walked before us. They show us the path.*
10. *They show us that collectively, we make the world. Understanding how we make the world – how it could be made*

or understood differently – is the road toward realizing our full human potential. It is the road to true freedom.

Take a picture of your artwork to include at the top of your application. Submit your work at anth101.com/challenge10.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dubbed "the prophet of an education revolution" by the Kansas City Star, Michael Wesch is internationally recognized as a leader in teaching innovation. The New York Times listed him as one of 10 professors in the nation whose courses "mess with old models" and added that "they give students an experience that might change how they think, what they care about or even how they live their lives." Wesch is well-known for his digital work. His videos have been viewed over 20 million times, translated in over 20 languages, and are frequently featured at international film festivals and major academic conferences worldwide. Wesch has won several major awards for his work, including the US Professor of the Year Award from the Carnegie Foundation, the Wired Magazine Rave Award, and he was named an Emerging Explorer by National Geographic.