

August 14, 2014

Dear people,

today is my 30<sup>th</sup> birthday. Many people believe that by the age of 30 you have to be “settled”, but I do not want to settle for a narrow vision on life. Instead, I like to dream and work on making my dreams come true! I chose freedom, not settlement!

Since in English your anniversary is called 'birthday', I want to birth my vision for the next year on this day. In the coming year I want to initiate and co-organize a **training in Nonviolence** in the Netherlands<sup>1</sup> for young people. Nonviolence will be introduced as a **life style**, a source of spiritual guidance and a form of action. Participants will learn about nonviolence in relation to systemic change politically, socially, economically, culturally and ecologically. The training will encompass internships for about 10 youth and weekly workshops and get-togethers for 10 weeks, most likely during the summer.

I want to run the whole program on a “**Gift Economy Model**”, which means that I will try not to engage with traditional fundraising, but with crowd funding and invite all people to contribute in what ever way they want to. This way it will also be a very **participative, collaborative and creative** project. Your first collaboration can be to [vote for a project name](#).

I am very **dedicated** to providing this training because a Nonviolence training that I did in 2009 in the USA gave me many **insights and deep courage** to stand firm in knowing that where-ever we are we can solve conflict without violence. The program in the Netherlands will build on the program I did in the USA. A friend and I are working on editing the materials and making them available online for every one, so that people can adapt it to their local circumstances.

I am **passionate** about this project, because I believe that I have gained so much knowledge and skills about Nonviolence that it is time for me to share it with the world, for whomever wants to receive it. And in this way I hope to co-create a more peaceful world, in which people live a **wholesome life** in which they act from **compassion**, in which they feel **loved**, listened to and seen. I want to give space for people's **imagination and dreams** to arise and speak up and out, so they can put their ideas into action. To imagine something that goes against the dominant frame work is a radical thing to do, and I strongly encourage it! ;-)

I hope that after this year I will be able to take the first steps towards offering workshops in Nonviolence around the globe, and contribute to **writing history rooted in a more equal, collaborative, participative, healthy and peaceful narrative**.

While I often used to ask books for my birthday, this time I ask for **living knowledge**. What knowledge, information or skills do you have that can contribute to my vision? What is a birthday gift that is a true **gift for the world**? I am curious to see how you feel moved to contribute! (And I have some ideas to get you started!)<sup>2</sup> I hope you will **join me** in this effort. We are so much more powerful together than we are alone!

With this vision I very much look forward to entering a new decade! May all our days, beyond our birthdays, be moments in which we can **learn, envision and act**!

With love,

Nina

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1 I chose the Netherlands because it is the home of the International Court of Justice and I want to explore what justice really means in relation to peace. I also want to give back to the country in which I was raised. And I recognized that there is nothing in Europe that is similar to the training I did in the USA.

2 First of all, I need team members, (at least three, ideally five) to organize this together with me and can make a commitment to spend a few hours a week on this, increasing over time when the training is near, and be present during the training. Crucial pieces for the training itself are housing and food for the participants, a workshop venue, workshop materials, (flip-overs, pens, notebooks etc.) additional suggestions for organizations that want to partner with us, contacts with universities (for recruitment purposes), books/resources you think we can add to our curriculum. Help with organizing crowd-funding is welcome too. I hope to launch this by October 2014, so keep in the loop if you want to contribute financially!