

**PEACE ON THE STREETS FOR MIKLOS UCHA**  
**THE STORY OF ONE YOUNG MAN'S VICTORY OVER VIOLENCE**  
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An eye for an eye would only make the whole world blind. Such is the analysis of Mahatma Gandhi, who publicized the fact that acts of retaliation only result in furthering harm (rather than alleviating it).

Harm — it's no secret how much America has been bombarded with harm; every week in the news, we find a surplus of reports on shootings and detonations of weaponry. The sickening trend seems to go unchecked. But, hope dawns on the horizon, the youth of the SGI-USA have taken a stand against violence! Right now their Victory Over Violence campaign (VOV) is well under way all over the nation, SGI districts have started exploring what's needed to reverse the tide of violence flooding our cities.

During each rehearsal for the upcoming youth culture festival in Los Angeles, the Southern California youth, utilizing the reality of modern America, stage presentations of the VOV campaign. Seven hundred participants work together to deepen their understanding of nonviolence. One such participant is Miklos Ucha.

Miklos is not a small lad. He stands 6'1" and tips the scale at over 200 pounds. This robust 18-year-old, though quite gentle in manner, would hardly find himself disadvantaged in a fistfight. He could easily dominate almost anyone who'd tempt him.

But, this story is not about Miklos winning a heavyweight title. This story is about both Miklos and his would-be enemy together winning a victory of peace — a victory through nonviolence.

Late in the day, out on the basketball court, comes a pick-up game, where the occasional sharp elbow and NHL body-check are used to keep things competitive; street hoops is a very physical sport and tensions can easily fly. Fly is what they did for young Miklos. An accidental contact led to a fall, and before he knew it Miklos had unintentionally knocked over his opponent. It wasn't a malevolent deed but the knocked-over young man —let's call him Buster — re-injures his already sprained ankle as he falls, and promptly finds himself in a fury.

So what does Buster do? Buster gets in Miklos's face. And, what does Miklos do? Miklos gets in Buster's face. It's what looks to be a one-on-one bout, but within a hot second, Buster and Buster's brother (tag team) are pummeling Miklos. The brother grabs Miklos from behind while Buster sends two sharp-fisted blows right toward Miklos's eye. Immediately he's cut and blood covers his face. Miklos is in the midst of battle.

But Miklos is not despairing. He outweighs Buster and Co. by a good 50 pounds each, so it's a matter of the elephant shrugging off two dogs, which inevitably happens. The Buster Brothers lose their advantage and opt to flee for the nearest fence.

Miklos pursues, catches up and slams Buster into the chain links. He holds Buster in a dead grip, completely in control. He thinks of how he's been hurt, not physically, but emotionally — his pride wounded. Everyone on the court goads big Miklos on, cheering for a bloody brawl. He sets up for an attack.

But then Miklos stops. The VOV skits he's been watching at the culture festival practice — all those scenes of harmonizing and finding alternatives to violence — start appearing in his head. "What am I doing?" he asks himself. "I'm supposed to be fighting for peace."

And with that revelation, in the middle of the melee, Miklos releases his arms and frees

his opponent. Though his eye is bleeding badly and the perpetrator stands helplessly before him, Miklos chooses not to retaliate. Instead, he takes a triumphant stand over his own inner urge to conduct violence.

Buster is at this point scampering off. And the onlookers are disappointed at having missed the show that “could have been.” But, an impression is made on these youngsters through Miklos’ courageous example – there’s a powerful alternative to fist fighting!

And, what’s more, Buster has a victory too. An hour later he returns to the courts, approaches Miklos, and offers a sincere apology. “This whole fight is stupid,” he says. “I’m sorry for hitting you.”

The two young men share a truce, a moment of peace, which is everything that non-violence is about — victory for both sides. Instead of escalating a conflict into a feud of fists and maybe later bullets, the two young men advance together toward the very real, very enduring resolution of friendship.

Currently Miklos is happily attending the culture festival rehearsals where he disciplines himself in the extremely physical activity of singing in a chorus. There’s a saying in his family: Tell me who you hang with and I’ll tell you who you are.

He proudly declares that his friends are those who win victory over violence every day. That says it all.

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