

# Cesar Chavez

## Quotes

*Sacrifice, People, Struggle, Men, Peace, Commitment, Giving, Powerful, Heart,  
Justice, Humanity, Animal, Children, Believe, Fighting, Mean, Winning, Long,  
Leadership, Food*

To make a great dream come true, the first requirement is a great capacity to dream; the second is persistence.

~Cesar Chavez

True wealth is not measured in money or status or power. It is measured in the legacy we leave behind for those we love and those we inspire.

~Cesar Chavez

The people united will never be defeated.

~Cesar Chavez

Preservation of one's own culture does not require contempt or disrespect for other cultures.

~Cesar Chavez

Grant me courage to serve others; For in service there is true life.

~Cesar Chavez

Non-violence is not inaction. It is not discussion. It is not for the timid or weak... Non-violence is hard work.

~Cesar Chavez

In giving of yourself, you will discover a whole new life full of meaning and love.

~Cesar Chavez

You cannot uneducate the person who has learned to read.

~Cesar Chavez

A symbol is an important thing. That is why we chose an Aztec eagle. It gives pride...When people see it they know it means dignity.

~Cesar Chavez

If you really want to make a friend, go to someone's house and eat with him... the people who give you their food give you their heart.

~Cesar Chavez

The fight is never about grapes or lettuce. It is always about people.

~Cesar Chavez

You cannot oppress the people who are not afraid anymore.

~Cesar Chavez

It's ironic that those who till the soil, cultivate and harvest the fruits, vegetables, and other foods that fill your tables with abundance have nothing left for themselves.

~Cesar Chavez

What I do shows people what kind of person I am.

~Cesar Chavez

From the depth of need and despair, people can work together, can organize themselves to solve their own problems and fill their own needs with dignity and strength.

~Cesar Chavez

Together, all things are possible

~Cesar Chavez

The people who give you their food give you their heart.

~Cesar Chavez

In 1968, I became a vegetarian after realizing that animals feel afraid, cold, hungry, and unhappy like we do.

~Cesar Chavez

We draw our strength from the very despair in which we have been

forced to live. We shall endure.

~Cesar Chavez

We need to help students and parents cherish and preserve the ethnic and cultural diversity that nourishes and strengthens this community - and this nation.

~Cesar Chavez

There's no turning back...We will win. We are winning because ours is a revolution of mind and heart.

~Cesar Chavez

We have looked into the future and the future is ours.

~Cesar Chavez

The love for justice that is in us is not only the best part of our being but it is also the most true to our nature.

~Cesar Chavez

Our language is the reflection of ourselves. A language is an exact reflection of the character and growth of its speakers.

~Cesar Chavez

Students must have initiative; they should not be mere imitators. They must learn to think and act for themselves - and be free.

~Cesar Chavez

There is enough love and good will in our movement to give energy to our struggle and still have plenty left over to break down and change the climate of hate and fear around us.

~Cesar Chavez

Real education should consist of drawing the goodness and the best out of our own students. What better books can there be than the book

of humanity?

~Cesar Chavez

In the final analysis it doesn't really matter what the political system is...We don't need perfect political systems; we need perfect participation.

~Cesar Chavez

Being of service is not enough. You must become a servant of the people. When you do, you can demand their commitment in return.

~Cesar Chavez

[We believe that unions have always been about much more than the industries in which they operate.] The fight is never about grapes or lettuce, ... It is always about people.

~Cesar Chavez

Never, never is it possible to reach someone if you become angry or bitter only love and gentleness can do it. Maybe not this time but maybe the next or the hundredth time.

~Cesar Chavez

There is no substitute for hard work, 23 or 24 hours a day. And there is no substitute for patience and acceptance.

~Cesar Chavez

Once social change begins, it cannot be reversed.

~Cesar Chavez

I am an organizer, not a union leader. A good organizer has to work hard and long. There are no shortcuts. You just keep talking to people, working with them, sharing, exchanging and they come along.

~Cesar Chavez

We must understand that the highest form of freedom carries with it the greatest measure of discipline.

~Cesar Chavez

When the man who feeds the world by toiling in the fields is himself deprived of the basic rights of feeding, sheltering, and caring for his own family, the whole community of man is sick.

~Cesar Chavez

When you sacrifice, you force others to sacrifice. It's an extremely powerful weapon.

~Cesar Chavez

Our very lives are dependent, for sustenance, on the sweat and sacrifice of the campesinos. Children of farm workers should be as proud of their parents' professions as other children are of theirs.

~Cesar Chavez

Our language is the reflection of ourselves.

~Cesar Chavez

Concentration is inspiration. You must be completely overtaken by your work and your subject. Only then do all your influences and experience come up to the surface.

~Cesar Chavez

Only when we have become nonviolent towards all life will we have learned to live well with others.

~Cesar Chavez

When any person suffers for someone in greater need, that person is a human.

~Cesar Chavez

There are many reasons for why a man does what de does. To be himself he must be able to give it all. If a leader cannot give it all he cannot expect his people to give anything.

~Cesar Chavez

I'm not going to ask for anything unless the workers want it. If they want it, they'll ask for it.

~Cesar Chavez

Just as Dr. King was a disciple of Gandhi and Christ, we must now be Dr. King's disciples. Dr. King challenged us to work for a greater humanity. I only hope that we are worthy of his challenge.

~Cesar Chavez

It is my deepest belief that only by giving our lives do we find life.

~Cesar Chavez

You are never strong enough that you don't need help.

~Cesar Chavez

When we are really honest with ourselves we must admit our lives are all that really belong to us. So it is how we use our lives that determines the kind of men we are.

~Cesar Chavez

There's no reason to be non-violent. There's no challenge unless you are living for people.

~Cesar Chavez

I've always maintained that it isn't the form that's going to make the difference. It isn't the rule or the procedure or the ideology, but it's human beings that will make it.

~Cesar Chavez

If you give yourself totally to the nonviolence struggle for peace and justice you also find that people give you their hearts and you will never go hungry and never be alone.

~Cesar Chavez

The non-violent technique does not depend for its success on the goodwill of the oppressor, but rather on the unfailing assistance of God.

~Cesar Chavez

Because we have suffered, and we are not afraid to suffer in order to survive, we are ready to give up everything - even our lives - in our struggle for justice.

~Cesar Chavez

When you have people together who believe in something very strongly - whether it's religion or politics or unions - things happen.

~Cesar Chavez

Non-violence exacts a very high price from one who practices it. But once you are able to meet that demand then you can do most things.

~Cesar Chavez

Talk is cheap...It is the way we organize and use our lives everyday that tells what we believe in.

~Cesar Chavez

The first principle of non-violent action is that of non-cooperation with everything humiliating.

~Cesar Chavez

There is no such thing as defeat in non-violence.

~Cesar Chavez

We are suffering. We have suffered. And we are not afraid to suffer in order to win our cause.

~Cesar Chavez

Violence just hurts those who are already hurt...Instead of exposing the brutality of the oppressor, it justifies it.

~Cesar Chavez

It takes a lot of punishment to be able to do anything to change the social order.

~Cesar Chavez

In some cases non-violence requires more militancy than violence.

~Cesar Chavez

When a man or woman, young, or old, takes a place on the picket line for even a day or two, he will never be the same again.

~Cesar Chavez

Look at the John Birch Society. Look at Hitler. The reactionaries are always better organizers.

~Cesar Chavez

Nonviolence is really tough. You don't practice nonviolence at conferences; you practice it on picket-lines.

~Cesar Chavez

Self dedication is a spiritual experience.

~Cesar Chavez

Do not romanticize the poor...We are all people, human beings subject to the same temptations and faults as all others. Our poverty damages our dignity.

~Cesar Chavez

Who gets the risks? The risks are given to the consumer, the unsuspecting consumer and the poor work force. And who gets the benefits? The benefits are only for the corporations, for the money makers.

~Cesar Chavez

If you're not frightened that you might fail, you'll never do the job. If you're frightened, you'll work like crazy.

~Cesar Chavez

We'll organize workers in this movement as long as we're willing to sacrifice. The moment we stop sacrificing, we stop organizing.

~Cesar Chavez

In the no-nonsense school of adversity, which we did not choose for ourselves, we are learning how to operate a labor union.

~Cesar Chavez

Years of misguided teaching have resulted in the destruction of the best in our society, in our cultures and in the environment.

~Cesar Chavez

The end of all knowledge must be the building up of character.

~Cesar Chavez

What is at stake is human dignity. If a man is not accorded respect he cannot respect himself and if he does not respect himself, he cannot demand it.

~Cesar Chavez

However important the struggle is and however much misery and poverty and degradation exist, we know that it cannot be more important than one human life.

~Cesar Chavez

Non-violence has suffered its biggest defeat in the hands of people who most want to talk about it.

~Cesar Chavez

The strike and the boycott, they have cost us much. What they have not paid us in wages, better working conditions, and new contracts, they have paid us in self-respect and human dignity.

~Cesar Chavez

The basis for peace is respecting all creatures.

~Cesar Chavez

We don't know how God chooses martyrs. We do know that they give us the most precious gift they possess - their very lives.

~Cesar Chavez

I would not take one cup of coffee from a grower...There's not a good one. I hate them. A few presents, a little talk, then the noose. That's how capitalism works.

~Cesar Chavez

Non violence means people in action. People have to understand that with non-violence goes a hell of a lot of organization.

~Cesar Chavez

We need, in a special way, to work twice as hard to help people understand that animals are fellow creatures, that we must protect them and love them as we love ourselves...

~Cesar Chavez

We are certain God's will is that all men share in the good things this earth produces.

~Cesar Chavez

Our conviction is that human life and limb are a very special possession given by God to man and that no one has the right to take that away, in any cause, however just...

~Cesar Chavez

Our union represents a breaking away...represents sharing a power, represent questioning, represents a new force...however long it takes, we are geared for a struggle.

~Cesar Chavez

Organizing is an educational process. The best educational process in the union is the picket line and the boycott. You learn about life.

~Cesar Chavez

In non-violence the cause has to be just and clear as well as the means.

~Cesar Chavez

We do not need to kill or destroy to win. We are a movement that builds and not destroys.

~Cesar Chavez

The only ones who make things change are fanatics. If you're not a fanatic around here, you can't cut it.

~Cesar Chavez

If we are full of hatred, we can't really do our work. Hatred saps all that strength and energy we need to plan.

~Cesar Chavez

If you win non-violently, then you have a double victory, you have not only won your fight, but you remain free.

~Cesar Chavez

We are organizers at heart. Most of us in the movement take great pride in being able to put things together.

~Cesar Chavez

We're going to pray a lot and picket a lot.

~Cesar Chavez

The thing that we have going for us is that people are willing to sacrifice themselves.

~Cesar Chavez

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