

LIGHT LOUNGE

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Peace is not the absence of war. War, in all of its forms, is the absence of peace. Peace is an internal spiritual force, which radiates into the material world. Some of its features are tranquility, patience, permission, poise, and acceptance. Peace can afford to be generous. These features represent the psychological and psychic structures that allow this force to enter into this world; and peace itself builds these structures. This energy represents one of the most healing expressions of God.

Just as many believe that the current Dalai Lama is the living embodiment of divine compassion, masters exist that embody and transmit peace. Some say that when masters transmit divine forces, they are channeling those energies. They are permitting metaphysical forces to operate through them and are acting as agents of positive, evolutionary change. Of course, you don't have to be a guru to experience this energy. Peace, like other metaphysical forces, manifests by degree. A master is simply an individual who is more open to it. Others may experience it, but to lesser degrees; they are more occupied with the difficulties of daily life, which can distract them and block that flow of energy.

If you toss a pebble into a pool of water, it shatters the surface tension. Waves race from the center of the disturbance. As the pebble meanders to the bottom, however, it agitates the water less and less. The superficial person, likewise, is interested only in surface events. When a "pebble incident" happens, waves of stress destroy whatever peace he has. The same incident though would not disturb an individual who has his consciousness anchored in the depths of tranquility.

Living Peace

Just because you are not fighting with someone doesn't mean that you are at peace. Your mind could be picking over the details of what happened the other day or struggling to determine the outcome of a future event. This is not peace.

Peace is a force. Loosely speaking, it is alive - not an idea, an emotion, or something that you imagine. Neither is it a psychological state, although peace affects one's mental, emotional, and even physical condition. It penetrates to your soul and is as tangible as humidity. This force is profound and is more real than material reality in the sense that it is infinite rather than finite. You have probably been around someone that makes you feel calm. The energy is tangible. In the most elementary sense, peace is a vibration.

This tangible "realness" applies to other divine traits as well, like compassion, grace, bliss, truth, and love. While these are all attributes of the same Being (God), when they manifest in this world, they each take on their own distinct expression, much like sunlight passing through a prism and splitting into a rainbow of colors.

The Emotions

Anger

The emotional body is reactionary by nature. When someone threatens us, it triggers the fight or flight instinct - anger for fight, fear for flight. While both responses stop the flow of peace, anger is the more potent and violent of the two.

Astrologically, Mars and Pluto represent this disruptive, energetic state: meanness erupts, volcano-like, from the ego (Mars) or the id (Pluto). Understanding what triggers our anger can help us transcend it, but this takes courage: we have to take an honest look at our ego. Dealing with id issues takes considerably more work, because they are buried so deep within the psyche.

Anger often troubles people of conscience. Many try to suppress it because they believe it's a bad emotion and shouldn't be expressed. This approach, though, can work against them. Anger is energy, and if you chronically suppress it, it can cause both physical and mental health problems. You could conclude that "getting it out" is a good thing, but there's a catch: habitually expressing all anger can produce a destructive personality. Addiction-wise, anger is almost as insidious as alcohol. In the current social hierarchy, those with power tend to share their displeasure (and unpleasantness) more freely and are generally protected in doing so. The boss can angrily insult you without much fear of reprisal. The employee, on the other, could lose his or her job by acting in the same manner.

Most people believe that they are justified in their anger; although people can pretend that they are angry in order to bluff somebody, real anger is usually self-righteous. It produces a flush of power - an ego rush - that can be exhilarating and enjoyable (at least until the backlash hits). People who classify themselves as "good" normally don't admit to enjoying it, but denial is delusion. It prevents us from discovering the truth about ourselves.

People also can be tempted to feel guilty about their anger, but this only prolongs and confuses the matter. It's best first to accept the condition, apologize for what was said and done, and then move on. Like a thunderstorm, anger passes through now and then, darkening the skies, raining on our parade.

Fear

Fear is an emotional response based on avoidance: avoidance of pain, loss, change, or the unknown. It destroys peace. Oddly, the fear that something will change often creates more suffering than the change itself. If you fear too much, it turns into worry. Too much worry develops into anxiety. Anxiety, unchecked, progresses to neurosis. Neurosis can sink into psychosis. Generally, they all grow from the same seed.

From the place of peace, loss and change are understood as natural elements of the universe. Change results in loss, and it happens to everything. Loss is not the universe picking on you - it is not personal. Yet, in the big picture, nothing is really lost. Much like the First Law of Thermodynamics (you can't create or destroy energy), everything IS and that's a given; it just changes, that's all. The fear of loss is based on the misconception that you can really own something in the first place. At best, ownership is a fleeting, man-made conception, which is founded, ironically, on fear.

Fear and anger, then, are two emotions that prevent us from experiencing peace. As this applies to all humanity, how does this affect the possibility of Peace on Earth?

Barriers to World Peace and Evolution

If peace is a metaphysical quality, then what are the prospects of world peace happening? Obviously, we can't create a lasting peace through laws, treaties, and negotiations. We have seen clearly how a few ruthless men can sacrifice peace on the unholy altar of greed, power, and idealism. They use deceit and fear to persuade others to create hell on earth for them (they seldom risk their own lives in the fight). They arrogantly trample international laws and treaties. That evil men - evil in the sense of intentionally harming others - gain power and abuse it is not something new, of course. The ancient Greeks would quote Solon: "You yourselves have made these men great by giving them your support, and that is why you have fallen into evil slavery. Each of you walks with the step of the fox, but taken all together, your mind is vain. For you look to the tongue and the words of a crafty man, and you do not see the deed that is being done."

To create a peaceful world, we must evolve spiritually as individuals and as a species. It's that simple, but is it possible? If you believe our species cannot evolve spiritually, then pursuing peace is impractical. It's a waste of time.

You can't blame anyone for thinking that way. After all, "A leopard can't change its spots." Look at the world today: we see torture, civil and economic oppression, and endless war being enshrined into law. Lying, now sanitized and called "spin" by the mainstream media, is an increasingly popular and, unfortunately, acceptable form of communication, both in politics and in business. Yet, because of the large-scale suffering that these practices create, more people are seeing beyond the lies. They are waking up and realizing that we can't continue like this. The systems and worldviews are devolutionary and are not sustainable. They are destined to collapse, which could have large-scale, devastating effects.

Similar flaws have become obvious in most major religions. Instead of promoting peace, unity, and acceptance, the more fervent true believers won't rest until they have converted everyone to their point of view. It's not a job, it's a mission. Naturally, this leads to conflict. Politically and culturally, they scorn, pass laws against, and may even kill those who refuse to conform to their beliefs and particular norms of morality. Jesus would roll over in His grave (had He not ascended), if He saw what some of His followers were promoting in His name. "Oye vey!"

We can say the same about aggressive nationalism, racism, and politics. They create enemy consciousness in the minds and hearts of people, which is a militant, reactionary outlook on life. It is the antithesis of peace. These "hell attitudes" are archaic and, if we're lucky, they will go the way of the dinosaurs - extinct. They have outlived their usefulness to us as a species. Realists argue that it's just the way it is: people are selfish and violent and that will never change. But people do change.

New Vision

In contrast, peace employs unity consciousness. People work together. They understand that we are all interrelated. That we are interrelated isn't some warm, fuzzy, idealistic notion; it's how life works. Unity consciousness produces a better way of life for all, and it evolves the species in the meantime. And, again, people do change - there's no question about that - so it's just a matter of scale: can a large number of people change and evolve? Philosophically, we can approach this question in three ways.

First, science theorizes that forms, including humans, evolve over time. This is progress: forms become more complex, conscious, and self-aware. However, science does not believe in spirit, much less spiritual evolution, so the discussion ends here. Science cannot help beyond this point.

Second, you would think that religion could explain spiritual evolution, but the Western varieties lack a global vision. Christianity's apocalyptic Second Coming of Christ is more of a worldwide reward and punishment story having little to do with evolution. Islam and Judaism have their "It's-all-about-Our-Group" failings as well. Another dead-end.

You can't fault religion for this though. Their stories were written before the dawn of global consciousness, at least in the context that we understand it today. Yet, "Love one another" is timeless advice and may help us through the crises we are now facing.

A third and newer model exists that combines elements of science and spirituality. It claims that as forms evolve, so does the opportunity for spiritual evolution. In other words, the higher evolved the physical form, the greater the chance for spiritual awareness to grow. Physical and spiritual evolution are intertwined. They dance, nudging each other to greater heights.

Physical forms diversity and become more complex. Science claims that these evolutionary changes develop by chance in response to environmental pressures. This newer model, however, adds more to the theory: that "meta-neural pathways," if you will, exist and become more sophisticated and sensitive as the physical form evolves. These pathways allow the body to receive metaphysical (other-plane) input; and they don't develop by chance. They allow spirit's influence on materially embedded consciousness to increase, which has the effect, among other things, of simplifying and unifying everything.

Complex yet simple: this is the paradox of the universe stretching and awakening to itself. If this is the case, and it certainly could be, then the path towards world peace is practical and is worth traveling.

Techniques for Finding Peace

Traveling the path of inner peace is an ongoing spiritual exercise. It requires that we remove elements from our psyche that disturb us and that we open the door to peace. When it opens, that energy pours into our body. This door is located in the center of the chest. (Perhaps a more accurate description than a "door" would be that it opens like the shutter of a camera lens or, more poetically, like the unfolding of the petals of a flower.)

To help open it, you release the fears associated with surface concerns and become anchored in the reality of your spirit. Most religions preach this, except they substitute "your spirit" with "Jesus," "Allah," "Krishna," or whatever deity they worship. "Let go; let God." The point is, the force of peace is transcendent. You don't struggle for peace; you open to it. Although you can't force a flower to open, you can water it, put fertilizer around it, keep the bugs off, and so forth. Likewise, you can use various means to calm your fears, dispel anger, clear the astral body, and coax open the door of peace.

Technique for Transcending Fear

One mental technique for letting go of certain kinds of fear is to understand that everyone, regardless of his or her looks or beliefs, comes from the same source. For the materialist, this would mean that we come from the earth. For the scientist, we are stardust. For the spiritualist, we are children of God or sparks of the same divine flame. Embodying this truth makes unity consciousness and, consequently, peace easier to sustain. "Embodying" means that the belief has become second nature or reality to us: all impressions of the world filter through that belief, and we interpret what we see within that frame of reference.

Technique for Transcending Anger

There is a technology for releasing anger called toning. Toning involves channeling sound. Mainstream society may never accept it as a sane practice, but it works for some people anyway. To the uninitiated, a person toning might look and sound like someone who is crazy or, worse, possessed. A therapist might think he's practicing some form of Primal Scream therapy. Yet, toning is neither. It is an advanced metaphysical procedure that clears the astral body and soothes the nerves.

To tone, you relax, take a deep breath, and then allow your spirit to make sounds through you. They can come out in short, percussive bursts, in long "Om"-like tones, or in whatever way it happens. To find out more about this practice, you can do a web search using the phrase "toning sounds" or visit www.starbuilders.org/i_music.html for an audio example.

Technique for Clearing Astral Clutter; Opening the Door

Additionally, a metaphysical technique exists that can remove accumulated clutter from the astral body, which can block the flow of peace. As you lie in bed, imagine a large vacuum hose about nine inches above your chest. Picture it leading up into an incredibly bright light. Say out loud, "I formally rescind any and all vows, promises, pledges, commitments, and agreements that I have made, in this life or any other, that prevent peace from flowing through me." Visualize the hose sucking up all the energy that you are releasing as a result of this exercise.

After a few moments, say out loud, "I release all energies, entities, and energetic structures that block the flow of peace into my life." Again, let the vacuum suck up the "bad vibes," astral implants, and any dubious astral entities loitering around. If you have astral vision, you might see an astral structure (a non-material "implant") attached to you. Release it — send everything up the hose and into the light.

Lastly, from that place of bright light, imagine golden rays beaming down — like searchlights — shining into your body. Let the lights evaporate any residue and tension that may remain. Shine them into every part of your body. You should feel totally relaxed when you are done.

For some, these practices can make them more peaceful, but if they don't work, many other techniques are available.

Individual tranquility is important, because what is world peace?: a planet full of peaceful individuals.

The Process of World Peace

While an individual finding inner peace is a radical event, world peace is a revolutionary state for humanity. For this to happen, it will require a dramatic change in human consciousness. We are experiencing that change now. Although this shift of consciousness is a single process, it blends four distinct phases. The phases are (1) the Old, (2) Critique, (3) Vision, and (4) Manifestation.

Phase One – the Old — represents the reactionary human and the systems it has developed. Survival oriented and primarily selfish, it cares only about itself. "Greed is good." It lacks respect for people's sovereignty and tries to dominate others, unless threatened by superior force. Primary biological instincts, rather than the voice of one's spirit, rule its life.

Phase Two – Critique — represents bringing to light the negative traits of the Old. The critics spell out the personal, social, global, and evolutionary consequences of the Old's devolutionary practices and worldviews. They do this because most of the Old's dirty deeds are done in secret. The greater the secrecy, the deeper the corruption. Plus, they lie like crazy. In addition, the Old holds their destructive worldviews and practices as "the way that it is" — an etched-in-stone reality, like "The poor are responsible for their condition." Yet, their "realities" or "self-evident truths" are no more than assumptions about reality. They act on them, which produces results, often "confirming" their belief. Today, our major socio-economic systems and worldviews are built on their assumptions. Many on the Left are fascinated with and participate in the Critique Phase. They dedicate themselves to exposing these faulty and deceptive ideas.

From the more astute and intellectual observers like Noam Chomsky, to John Perkins' first-hand, high-level participation in that system, to the flaming anarchist bloggers on the Internet, their job is to reveal the injustice, hypocrisy, destructiveness, and inefficiency that they have discovered. What they see often angers them, perhaps rightly so.

Phase Three – Vision — represents the sharing of ideas about how the New World will look and function. Visionaries have seen the Old for what it is. They have read the critiques and assimilated them. They have looked within themselves and at the situation. Inspired, they draw "how-to" maps of the New World. Their maps may be crude or detailed, but either way they provide alternate, evolutionary systems that can replace the decaying ones. We can apply these systems and attitudes to our personal lives and use them to organize society in new ways. David C. Korten, CEO Ray Anderson, and thousands of others are sharing their designs of the New World — a civilization based on love, cooperation, and plenty instead of fear, greed, and lack.

Phase Four – Manifestation — happens as the structures and attitudes of the visionaries (or groups of visionaries) take form. Look, for example, at what has happened in Belo Horizonte, a Brazilian city of over two million. Food has become a right of citizenship, just like "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

"This initiative stems for the simple, yet still revolutionary idea — that hunger is not caused by scarcity, but by lack of access to food, usually associated with poverty.

"Before the program began in 1993, one-fifth of the city's youngest children suffered from malnourishment. Today, while infant mortality rates have fallen only by 7% in Brazil, those rates have decreased by 41% in Belo Horizonte.

" 'Food is not a material commodity,' argues Adriana Aranha, director of Belo Horizonte's Hunger program, in the documentary *Silent Killer*, which aired on public television stations in the fall of 2005. 'It is as essential as the air we need to breathe. If people don't eat, they don't live.'

"Belo Horizonte's Programs . . . cost the city less than 1% of its budget . . ."*

This is just one small (but significant) step. Can you see the many far-reaching implications of such practices? For one, it provides a deep layer of social security. Projects like these are the building blocks of the New Civilization. Like new sprouts emerging from the soil, we need to support and nurture these projects, attitudes, and worldviews until they have taken root and grown strong. So speak up! Do something! Anything! Say Yes!

Conclusion

What blocks peace? Fear, anger, astral clutter, and a closed inner door are the culprits. Finding and sustaining inner peace is a formidable job; establishing world peace will require great intent on the part of many — and maybe a miracle, and evolutionary leap, or the unfolding of destiny. In any event, there are far more people who want to live peaceful lives than there are those who want war and strife. Could "Power to the People" be a means to world peace?

Some believe that the course of human spiritual evolution was encoded in the "DNA" of the universe even before its fiery birth. If that is true, then peace could be our destiny. For although a leopard cannot change its spots, it can have a change of heart; and maybe in the generations that follow, their bodies will follow the lead of their hearts, and their spots will change.

If we do evolve into a peace state, then we will be like the shimmering light of six billion stars, shining together as one, lighting the Earth as if it too were a star.

* Yes magazine, Issue #37, page 25