

Peace Begins at Home

All minds are joined. Therefore, all healing is self-healing. Our inner peace will, of itself, pass to others once we accept it for ourselves.

Gerald G. Jampolsky

Many years ago, I heard someone state that it's impossible to have a healthy or successful life if one's home is lacking peace and harmony. Immediately, that rang true for me. For how can one be a messenger of peace if drama, chaos, and grievances co-exist within one's home—the very foundation where one's physical, spiritual and emotional being resides? I've met people who have prided themselves for taking political action toward world peace and people who have served on religious committees for world healing. And believe it or not, some of these same people have not addressed the anger simmering beneath the surface of their own families, or sought to heal the resentments within their own minds.

A few years ago I was having a discussion with a group of women who were involved in a task force committed to world peace. As the discussion ensued, a couple of the women began to express how unhappy they were with their husband's behavior at home. The sharing soon turned into a full-fledged gripe session and I walked away wondering how "world peace" was going to be accomplished by people who seemed more focused on the shortcomings of a family member?

What is the "emotional climate" of your home? Home truly is where the heart resides and the emotional condition of one's heart determines the well-being of one's home life and the amount of peace one can truly express into the world. If we are withholding love, blaming or accusing those closest to us, then how effectively can we be bearers of peace? Or for that matter, how can we be of service in any meaningful way?

Another example comes to mind from a "peace march" I recently witnessed in a nearby town. As I was driving down one of the main streets, I noticed that hundreds of people had gathered, proudly and passionately carrying signs speaking out against war and several of our political leaders. While I appreciated the demonstrator's willingness to speak their truth, I began to think that real change, real peace, occurs at home...with us.

A Course in Miracles teaches, "Peace is clearly an internal matter. It must begin with your own thoughts then extend outward." During this time of upheaval, uncertainty and

impending war, we naturally want to stop the violence and hostility. Most of us want to see it stop “out there,” and so we focus on what the boss, government, community, and so forth, must do differently. Yet the truth remains that the world outside of us stems from our inner condition. Peace “out there” will only occur to the extent that we heal our own violent, angry, judgmental and victim-oriented thoughts.

Your thoughts are powerful beyond measure. They affect everyone around you, including those you will never meet. The genuine healer is one who sees drama, pain and upset, yet is willing to use the power of her mind to hold to the light behind the darkness; the growth within the event. People who do this are genuine miracle-workers for they choose to see the truth. They don't allow the outer circumstances to deter them from what is really happening behind mere physical appearances.

Peace is an inside job and it begins with you and me. Mary Manin Morrissey once affirmed, “When we stop merely tolerating life and begin to embrace it, when we release grudges and are willing to bury grievances, when we truly heal what ails our soul, and when we begin to live in truth, we find an innate holiness. We learn that every disorder seeks order, all dis-ease can find ease, and no anguish is beyond peace.”

So, whatever is happening in your home, or occurring within the world, if you truly want to be a messenger of peace and contribute to healing, practice the following exercise and watch as peace gently soothes your mind and soul:

- 1) Search your mind for anger-provoking situations, upsetting personalities or events, or anything else in which you are harboring unloving thoughts or feelings. Begin with the situations and people closest to your heart.
- 2) Note them as informally as possible and let them arise one-by-one, repeating to yourself, “*I could see peace in this situation [or with this person] instead of what I now see.*”
- 3) Keep repeating the choice for peace until you feel some sense of relief, then go to the next level of healing by repeating, “*I am willing to see peace in this situation instead of what I now see.*”
- 4) Next, deepen your sense of inner peace by repeating, “*I choose to see peace in this situation instead of what I now see.*”
- 5) Finally, allow yourself to fully surrender by repeating, “*Through the eyes of*

Love, I see only peace in this situation.”