

The Inner Peace Movement **For July 2000 Issue of Rising Women Magazine**

(Authors NOTE: This article was written pre September 11 yet, the truth to which it speaks that weas individuals must choose peace **first** from within, has not changed. If anything, it is more imperative now than ever before that we look within and choose peace in all that we are and all that we do, as the world looms at the brink of a War. Regardless of what we think will happen, ultimately no one gains peace through war. **Taron Puri, Feb 18, 2003**)

Is Peace possible? Will humanity ever reach a place where there is no more conflict, resistance, jealousy, envy, resentment, bitterness or anger? And where does the onus lie as to who is responsible for making peace a reality rather than a pipe dream? And do you even care? These questions have been foremost in my mind and heart as I realize that although we are into the “New Millennium”, there is in actuality nothing “new” about it, save for the number. We are still mired in the same issues which have plagued humanity for eons. And our inability to find lasting or meaningful peace in our lives has consistently occupied the stage front and center.

Peace as an “Inside” job

There is a longing within our hearts to belong which underscores all our thoughts, feelings and actions. It is an innate and intimate energy which compels us to reach out and find an environment to which we can anchor and call home. It is when this deepest of longings is not acknowledged or validated by society that we feel lost. And rather than going within to the source of this feeling, we strike out in anger, jealousy, envy, resentment, greed and a myriad of similar emotionally destructive behaviors. We essentially go to “War” with the world, both figuratively and literally, the latter being when the dynamic escalates from the individual to a group or societal level.

What we have failed to realize is that all along, Peace is, and always has been, an ‘inside’ job. It was never meant to be an external fix which could be manufactured and processed into the perfect picture we hold about its place and function in our lives. Rather it is something which comes only by ‘invitation’ from the Heart which has an innate knowing that peace is possible only when we call for it and when we are present enough to receive it when it comes. Instead, we have approached it from the head and tried to somehow manipulate it externally as an answer to our own conflicted nature. We have forgotten that peace starts from within and instead, allowed our heads to use fear to hijack the heart & justify killing each other in the name of religion or national security. Ultimately, peace can never be sourced in fear; rather, its source is trust, acceptance & unconditional love – all qualities which must be cultivated from within!

The Inner Peace Process

Investigating this dynamic at a personal level, ask yourself how can you expect there to be world peace when within yourself, it is homeless? An honest inventory of your life and how you are living it would likely reveal that like most others, it is still in pieces, fragmented & disintegrating or coming apart at a stellar pace? Even in your search for peace, the approach taken is often misdirected. For instance, the desire for people, things and particular states of mind such as happiness, has become a **prerequisite** to attaining peace. You think that after attaining these things, then there will have peace, even though history has shown otherwise. During counseling sessions, a colleague of mine will often ask the client the question, “**Do you want happiness or Peace**”? Hitting like a ton of bricks, this sobering question highlights the point that there can be **no** pre-conditions to attaining peace!

So where do you go from here? Are you destined to live in conflict all your life or is there a way out? For me, there is a way out and simply put, **the way out is through the way in!** You have to begin by accepting that, for there to be peace in the outside world, your inner world or environment has to be at peace. Like an echo, our external world only sends back the message which you send out so that at all times, it was never about something outside you. Secondly, reflect on the simple yet powerful statement “Live and Let Live”. What does this mean to you? Are you adhering to it? What is it within you which needs your acceptance, love and healing which instead is being judged and consequently, casting judgments? Thirdly, ask yourself, “what investment do I have in being Right”? At what cost do I choose to be right over having peace?

These questions require you to dig deep into the depths of your own psyche & consciously recognize whether or not your thoughts, feelings, actions and desires are integrative, and therefore supportive of peace, or fragmented & consequently oriented towards perpetual conflict. Only through conscious awareness of this dynamic, coupled with an honest willingness to seek peace ‘first’ from within, can you genuinely become directive of your thoughts, desires and actions in the direction of attaining lasting peace globally.

Give Peas a Chance

This catchy phrase holds more wisdom than first meets the eye. Along with being amusing, metaphorically, individual peas always grow & live in the same pod. Essentially, like us, they are **Individual but not Separate**. By becoming aware of this fact, you can begin to live your life knowing that all your thoughts, feelings and actions are an individualized and unique expression which exists within a greater reality that is intimately connected with all other individuals in your world – much like peas in a pod! So are you ready to give Peas a Chance?