

Yearning for PEACE Part I

by Margret Rueffler

Most people I know, and those I meet yearn for peace. They deeply desire to live in peace. Yet in spite of all yearning, peace seems to retreat more and more to an unreachable distance.

Is peace an unattainable goal?

Peace is the goal of many people and nations. It is often spoken of, thought about and desired; however, it is very rarely experienced directly by individuals and nations.

In some Buddhist countries, like Bhutan in the Himalayas, where the population has lived in peace for many years, it seems that living in peace is only possible when controlled, limited access to the Western technology and its values is allowed. The Aborigines of Australia lived in deep harmony and peace with each other and the earth when the mostly Western settlers took their lands and repressed their culture.

Why is peace such a distant goal?

Our society thrives on conflict – inner conflicts, conflict with others, with family and at work. We are in conflict with the earth, treating her as an enemy, abusing her. Could it be that conflict is an integral part of our society and make-up, inherent in our cultural heritage, possibly of humanity as a whole?

The dynamics of conflict, real or projected, lead to a winner and loser concept and eventually to wars. Conflict is the result of one party's wanting



In Aceh, it took a tsunami, to bring an end to years of armed conflict.

to be right and believing that the other is wrong and should take on the perspective of the first party. If the second party refuses, a conflict ensues.

Personally, I believe that both participants in the conflict are losers, wasting their creative energy. Conflict is the precursor of violence and war, which, on a collective level, may lead to the death of many.

Is it possible to guide one's life energy into working creatively with others, into cooperation? In order to do this, a 180 degree turn and a conscious choice to let go of old habits are needed. Such a change would imply that both participants can be winners.

Ending a conflict and a war does not automatically bring about peace. These acts represent the end of a battle and killing. To live peace requires a deep change of inner attitude and awareness of the unconsciously held beliefs that lead to conflict. Through conscious choice each of us can allow our life energy to flow into a dynamic cooperative interaction with others, into life-giving actions. Then we begin to live peace.

Living peace is not possible without inner peace. How can I learn to deal with my own inner conflicts? My change of attitude toward myself and my inner conflicts will allow the peace within to emerge.


Each human being carries the power of peace within. Access to this power, however, seems buried. Peace is carried by the strength of the heart. Peace unfolds and grows where love flows. The time to learn again to listen to the voice of the heart, to turn toward this inner voice of love and wisdom, is now. I like to thank the heart for its daily work, pumping the life-giving blood through the complex system of the body, and thus learn to love myself again. I can also express gratitude to my body as a gift and to the life-giving earth for bringing it forth and nurturing it.

To live in peace is a conscious choice of each human being and we need to create a model that all can follow.






Children are always the victims of conflict.
(Photos taken in Aceh after the Tsunami by Marcus Armstrong)

This is the first in a series of two articles by Margret Rueffler Phd. A transpersonal psychologist and acupuncturist, she works with the long term prevention of violence and teaches internationally. More info: www.pppi.net email: info@pppi.net



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