

Awakening to True Peace

by Judith Waller, "The Soul Connector"

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote:

*"What lies behind us
and what lies before us
are tiny matters
compared to what lies within us."*

Have you thought lately about just how amazing you are? How incredible life is, and the miracles all around you, large and small... It's easy to lose sight of that, isn't it? You get caught up in the dramas and minutiae of daily life and that feeling of specialness, of uniqueness, somehow diminishes and fades.

Well, I'm here to remind you that you *are* special! And you have a special purpose for being here, right now. What is it, you ask? Simply to accept yourself as you are and, in so doing, to allow yourself to be all that you truly are.

Don Miguel Ruiz, author of *The Four Agreements*, said:

"There is wisdom in accepting what you are. It is difficult to be what you are not. Being what you are doesn't require any effort. When you become wise, you accept yourself the way you are, and the complete acceptance of yourself becomes the complete acceptance of everyone else."

I would add that accepting yourself as you are doesn't mean that you're somehow settling for second-best. On the contrary, when you let go of judgement and expectation, you liberate yourself from constraints and open yourself up to receive the best that life has to offer.

You also allow yourself to connect with that deep, peaceful place within you. This, in turn, connects you with a state of oneness with all things.

Consider the following passage, called "The True Peace", by Black Elk of the Oglala Sioux:

"The first peace, which is the most important, is that which comes within the souls of people when they realize their relationship, their oneness, with the universe and all its powers, and when they realize that at the center of the universe dwells Wakan-Taka (the Great Spirit), and that this center is really everywhere, it is within each of us.

This is the real peace, and the others are but reflections of this. The second peace is that which is made between two individuals, and the third is that which is made between two nations. But above all you should understand that there can never be peace between nations until there is known that true peace, which, as I have often said, is within the souls of men."

These words contain great wisdom: everything that you seek is within you. This is a universal truth that transcends all religions, all cultures, all time. Constantly focusing on external things is not the path to true peace. You must look beyond the surface and see with your inner eyes.

Antoine De Saint-Exupery, author of *The Little Prince*, wrote:

*"It is only with the heart that one can see rightly;
what is essential is invisible to the eye."*

When you see with your heart, you feel warmth and connectedness with all beings. One of the fundamental tenets of Buddhism is the concept of universal compassion. This is about accepting yourself and everyone around you, without judgement, understanding that each person is doing the best that they can.

Try this for yourself... Next time you're travelling to work on the train, or sitting in a cafe having a coffee, or in some other public place where you're surrounded by strangers, take a moment to centre yourself in your heart. Allow yourself to feel compassion for each person who is in that place with you. See how doing this changes the way you view others.

A wonderful exercise to do is to visualise a big ball of warm, loving, golden light in the centre of your chest. This light is flowing to you directly from The Source. Now imagine light radiating out to the person next to you, like the rays of the sun, activating their heart centre. And then the rays spread to the next person and the next, until every person is bathed in golden light and you feel the way all of you are connected, as one.

This is also a very healing process to use with anyone in your life you may be having difficulty connecting with -- whether a friend, family member or work colleague. The other person doesn't need to be in the same room with you, just imagine that heart to heart connection. Allow yourself to feel compassion for the other person and remind yourself that you're both doing the best that you can.

You always have the choice to express forgiveness. That doesn't mean that you condone negative or hurtful behaviour, simply that, from within yourself, you choose to release the negative emotions attached to the situation.

This is the path to wholeness and oneness. This is the path to true peace.

Always be gentle with yourself and remember that you *don't* need to have all the answers! As the poet W.B. Yeats said:

"Life is not a problem to be solved, but a mystery to be lived."

Enjoy the uniqueness of your own mystery as it is revealed to you...

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