

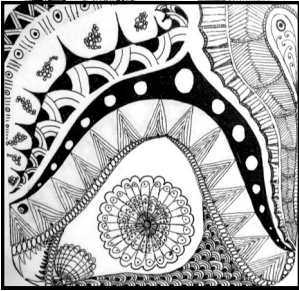
Friends of Silence

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“Is there enough Silence for the Word to be heard?”



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Dear Friends ~ In the wake of so much prejudice, violence and hatred, we must once again search our hearts for seeds of love and compassion. Why is it so hard to cultivate human kindness and respect? How is it that we can invent incredibly complex technology, push the limits of physical endeavor, and hone our intellects and yet be unable to transform the human heart? When will moral development and ethical evolution even catch up to, let alone surpass, our capacity for animosity and contempt and havoc? Who will be the teachers of peace, the champions of compassion?



Great compassion is the root of all forms of worship.

~ His Holiness the Dalai Lama

We cannot separate awareness and compassion. Awareness without compassion is sterile and lacks depth, while compassion without awareness is blind and unable to respond creatively to real situations. Awareness married to compassion allows a real relationship to develop. It is only through understanding, through a feeling of relationship to the world, that we can go beyond the selfishness that characterizes so much of the modern world.

~ from REFLECTIONS ON EVERYDAY LIFE by Paramananda

It is no longer good enough to cry peace—we must act peace, live peace, and live in peace.

~ Shenandoah proverb

We can only care for others if we are cared for...Caring is not something sentimental; it means giving time, listening, affirming, understanding and encouraging. It means also challenging and evaluating, when necessary....To care for people does not mean to flatter them; it is to help them discover their own worth and their gifts, in order to grow in truth, and to accept their brokenness and shadow sides...

~ from LETTER TO MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN L'ARCHE by Jean Vanier

The world is hungry for goodness and recognizes it when it sees it...When we glimpse it in people we applaud them for it. We long to be just a little like them. Through them we let the world's pain into our hearts, and we find compassion.

~ Desmond Tutu

Do you know that your fervent wishes can only find fulfillment if you succeed in attaining love and understanding of humankind, animals and plants, and stars, so that every joy becomes your joy and every pain your pain?

~ Einstein



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Compassion is the only way forward if we are to be well. Compassion for those who do not know that they are beloved. Compassion for the children and creatures who are suffering today. Compassion even for the people and nations who wrong us. Revenge has no future, apart from bitterness and the multiplication of wrong. As Mahatma Gandhi taught his people in the midst of his nation's struggle for justice and liberation, the philosophy of revenge, of an eye for an eye, will only make the whole world blind. If what we are committed to is transformation, then the only way forward is compassion, not revenge. A passion that is with and for the other as well as oneself, a passion that is with us and for the other *as* oneself.

From each heart is a window to other hearts
They are not separated like two bodies,
Just as, even though two lamps are not joined,
Their light is united in a single ray.

~ Jalaluddin Rumi

~ from *A NEW HARMONY* by John Philip Newell



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Learning to listen to our bodies, emotions and thoughts gives us the ability to recognize and deal with irrational states of mind, seeing them for what they really are, and learning to bless them and embrace them before letting them go. Mastery of our emotional and intellectual behaviors must begin with forgiving ourselves and others. Harboring old grievances and resentments is a sure way of creating negative energies which will produce negative outcomes. Knowing how to heal old wounds in positive ways and moving into the Light is an important lesson in the mastery of our behaviors.

~from *THE LIGHT WILL SET YOU FREE* by Milanovich and McCune

The stripping of pettiness from life in those early days of the war, the sense of unity and mutual help among all sorts and conditions of people, was a thing no one who was in England at that time could ever forget. There was an atmosphere of forgiveness everywhere, that most rare of human qualities...such moments reveal the beauty hidden in the most unlikely persons and affirm the truth, "what a piece of work is man, is woman!"

~from *SUCH STUFF AS DREAMS ARE MADE OF* by Helen Luke

Never in the world does hatred cease by hatred; hatred ceases by love. ~ Buddha

"Edward," she said softly. "Learn this from me. Holding anger is a poison. It eats you from inside. We think that hating is a weapon that attacks the person who harmed us. But hatred is a curved blade. And the harm we do, we do to ourselves. ~from *THE FIVE PEOPLE YOU MEET IN HEAVEN* by Mitch Albom

In the name of daybreak
and the eyelids of morning
and the wayfaring moon
and the night when it departs,

| swear | will not dishonor
my soul with hatred
but offer myself humbly
as a guardian of nature,
as a healer of misery,
as a messenger of wonder
as an architect of peace.

~ from "School Prayer" by Diane Acker-



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True compassion is more than flinging a coin at a beggar; it comes to see that an edifice that produces beggars needs restructuring.

~ Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Where love is strong, forgiveness can be there for us before there is any movement on our part. Something special happens when forgiveness is given fulfillment by its recognition and acceptance. Sorrow and understanding can be involved in healing. The words needed may be, "I'm sorry," and it may take time before it is clear that the words are real. But forgiveness is given, not earned. Healing may take time; the forgiveness is gift. Where there is love, the gift will not be withheld.

~from *GOD FIRST LOVED US* by Anthony F. Campbell

Compassion, even towards one's enemies, is a sign of nobleness and spiritual perfection.

~ Ostad Elahi