



Free Article

MINDFULNESS FOR PEACE

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Mindfulness for Peace

I think everyone wants a peaceful world. So how do we get there? One person at a time. If every being were at peace, there would be no war, no violence and the world would be peaceful. Sound too simplistic? It is. But it is also true.

The best thing that you can do to bring peace into the world is to practice being peaceful. In fact, that is the only thing you need to do. When you are opposed to something, you are in opposition. When you are not at peace, you are contributing to the problem.

To see what peace means to you try the following exercise:

What is peace?

Finish this sentence - Peace is...

Write down your statements so you can see what peace means to you

Now ask yourself, What is the opposite of peace? Write down your answers.

If you are not at peace, you are [fill in the blank]

Is your peace conditional? "I will be at peace if..."

Bring to mind a difficult situation.

Think about how you would feel if it comes out the way you want it to. Does it fit with your definition of peace?

Think about how you would feel if does not turn out the way you want it to. Does it fit with your definition of peace?

How do you know you are not at peace? Something doesn't feel "right". Discomfort. Fear. Anxiety. Anger. Negative emotions.

Pay attention to your feelings. Feelings are your **Emotional Guidance System** (from The Law of Attraction by Jerry and Esther Hicks). This will let you know if you are aligned with peace or not.

Our old friend Resistance.

When you are "against" something you are creating resistance. Even though you are fighting *for* something, you are still fighting. Whether you fight for or against anything, you are resisting. Mother Teresa when asked to participate in a demonstration against the war in Viet Nam, said "No. When you march for peace, I will be there." Resistance creates more resistance. Notice resistance in your body. It may appear as tenseness, stress, anger, frustration, impatience.

You can do anything from a place of peace. You do not have to be angry or upset to change things. In fact, it is more difficult to change something if you are resisting because the resistance itself creates tension which constricts the flow of change.

Noticing "Attack" thoughts

Do you feel like you are being attacked in any way? Do you feel like a victim? Are you attacking in any way? Either way you are not at peace. What kinds of thoughts are attack thoughts? Judgment - Guilt - Shame - Anger

If you are acting from a place of attack, you will feel negative emotions. You will feel resistance. Learn to feel it in your body.

Creating Peace in Yourself

How do you know you are at peace? You are comfortable with what is. You have no expectations. You feel love and acceptance. Positive emotions.

How do you create peace in yourself?

- Return to the present moment without expectations (or with the expectation of peace - “don't know” mind)



“Welcome this present moment as if you had invited it and work with it instead of against it.” Pema Chodron

- Notice feelings. Are you resisting? Let go of resistance.
- Make a conscious choice in every moment – choose peace



“I could see peace instead of this.” A Course in Miracles

- Notice attack thoughts. Decide to think peaceful thoughts.



**“Nothing is unless our thinking makes it so.”
Shakespeare**

- Forgive. Especially Forgive yourself.



“The light of the world brings peace to every mind through my forgiveness.”

“Forgiveness allows love to return to my awareness, I will see a world of peace and safety and joy. And it is this I choose to see, in place of what I look on now.”

A Course in Miracles

- Offer peace to yourself and others – Metta – Loving Kindness practice (see end of article for details on Metta)

Remember: You have to go through your anxiety/fear/discomfort to get to peace. Allow it to be there without making it “Bad”. When you make it bad, you get stuck in it.

What should you do when you don't think peaceful thoughts and don't have peaceful feelings - when you feel angry, frustrated, upset?

- Allow the feelings to be there – don't resist them; don't make them “bad”. Focus on the feelings, not the thoughts. Let the thoughts go. Just be with the feelings.
- Ask “What is this?” Answer, “I don't know.” Imagine that maybe you don't know how things “should” be and that maybe you don't know what's right for you or for anyone else. Let go of expectations. When you are uncertain, you are open to new information.
- Offer metta to yourself or to others, whichever is easier in the moment.
- Point yourself in the direction of peace. All your obstacles to peace will come up. Allow them to be there without resistance. Ask them to “walk with you in peace.” The obstacles are your doorway to peace.

What you give, you receive. If you want something (such as peace) you must give it.

If someone is angry with you or are angry in your presence, imagine it as a cry for love. If you can't send love to them in the moment, ask what is blocking it. Notice what it is **inside you** that is not allowing love to flow.

How do you bring peace into your/the world?

- Cultivate loving kindness and compassion for yourself and others.
- Be peace.
- Forgive. “Just for today, I hold no grievances.” In order to forgive you have to bring all of your blocks to forgiveness into the light of mindfulness and heal them. Forgive others. Forgive yourself.*

“Forgiveness is the ultimate preventative medicine as well as the greatest healer.” Marianne Williamson



* This excludes situations where you or someone else are in physical or emotional danger. You should do what needs to be done to remove yourself from such circumstances immediately. Sometimes it is hard to discern whether it is a real or imagined threat. The best thing to do is to get away until you can be sure that you are safe.

Daily practices for Peace



**“I don't need faith, I have experience.”
Joseph Campbell**

Ask yourself, “Would I rather be right or peaceful?”

Find a symbol of peace and carry it around with you or put it somewhere where you will see it often: a crystal, a quote, an artifact, the word love or the word peace written on a piece of paper. Whenever you feel disturbed, look at it or hold and take three mindful breaths, notice the feeling. Ask “What would Peace do?” Or “What would love do?”

Look at yourself in the mirror and say, “I love you [add your name].” Notice what comes up and allow it to be there. Take three mindful breaths before looking away.

Practices to Create Peace in Yourself

Present Moment, Only Moment: come back to breath with Don't Know mind

Mindfulness of Thoughts

Notice thoughts.

Ask “Does this thought create peace?”

If not, replace the disturbing thought with a peaceful thought, such as “In the present moment, there is peace.” or “Nothing can disturb my peace unless I allow it.” or “I choose peace.”

Mindfulness of Feelings

Be aware of feelings.

Allow the feeling to be there.

When thoughts arise, notice them and come back to the feeling.

Notice feelings of resistance.

Imagine holding the feeling as if it were your own precious child. Remember, it is only a feeling. It is not all you are. It will change.

Practices to Bring Peace into Your World
Metta - loving kindness practice

For yourself, be aware of your breath and say to yourself:

“may I be well and happy” or “I am well and happy”

“may I be strong, confident and peaceful”

“may I have ease and well-being”

For others:

“may you be well and happy” or “you are well and happy”

“may you be strong, confident and peaceful”

“may you have ease and well-being”

Forgiveness for others:

Bring to mind someone or something you feel you cannot forgive.

Ask why you cannot forgive. Answer I don't know.

Notice feelings that come up.

Allow the feelings to be there without judgment. [It's just a feeling. It is not who you are.]

Say, “I am willing to be shown another way.”

Do the same exercise for forgiveness for yourself.

References

Peace

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