

Personal Peace

It is a privilege to talk about something that may be a little different, but very familiar. For me, this is a personal quest—the importance of peace. A peace, not of consequences, but a personal peace, an individual peace for every human being. People want to stop wars and conflicts, but nobody addresses the individual with whom peace has to begin before one can even dream of stopping the wars and conflicts that exist in this world.

We live on planet Earth. We have an opportunity to do something so unique that it cannot even be imagined. We have the most incredible planet. And yet, it is so sad to see that people don't have clean water when that's what rains down.

Nature, in its infinite wisdom, says, "You need clean water. You need food. You need the sun. You need air to breathe." These are things everyone needs. They are obvious, but placed in the heart of every human being is also a want, a wish to be content, to be in peace. Food is important, water is important, clean air is important—all the basic necessities—but so is peace. Without peace, whatever structures are built, they crumble.



The fighting decimates. These conflicts are a disease. And like any disease, they affect anyone involved with them. The solution does not come from words, ideas, debates. The solution comes from within the heart of each human being. This is our humanity. There is a cry from within every single person that has been there since time immemorial, wanting to reach out and say, "Let there be peace." Personal peace. Individual peace. The peace that is for everyone. The peace that can be felt on a battlefield or in a prison.

Relationships change, but there is a relationship that you need to have with yourself, a relationship of reality built on fact, not fiction. Built on bricks that you can hold in your hand, not dreams and imaginations in midair. And that is called *experience*. When a thirsty person tastes good clean water, it is automatically sweet—without sugar. The experience of peace also has a very sweet taste.

We try to resolve all our problems. But when the baby cries, it doesn't matter how many times the mother says, "Don't cry," the baby will keep crying till the problem has been resolved. And then the baby will start cooing. Let's for a minute think of cooing as peace—people feeling something real within them, not created, but something inherent to every human being.

You are here, and that means something. Of all that you can accomplish, there is one more, and that has something to do with you. Generations down the road will scrutinize us, looking at our wars, our failures, and our successes. They will say, "Oh, they were so excited when they got to the moon." Will they say, "One of the most important things they pursued was peace"?

The face of peace has not changed. It has nothing to do with technology. It was talked about by the Greeks, the Romans, the Indians—the idea of people being in a state where they feel *real* joy. The expression of peace, of joy, is distinctly different from the expression of anger, frustration, conflict. Self-conflict is a war that rages. Only one thing can bring it to an end, and that is the individual peace, felt and understood.

Personal peace. The time has come to do it. It is incumbent upon our generation and generations that follow to pick up this banner and bring peace to this world.

This is a subject that is very, very close to me. Three years old, standing in front of people and speaking: Be happy. Be content. Be in joy. I am so fortunate that, 40 years later, I am still saying that: Be happy, be in joy.

Maharaji