

## Peace, Peace and Peacefulness

I've been thinking about this word and concept for years. For many years I would look at the world around me and wonder how can we ever be at peace? There is so much hatred, anger, violence, greed and self-centeredness in so many people. I would wonder why "they" wouldn't do something about it. "That country should do this, this person should do that, that guy is so selfish, that woman is so greedy, it's his fault, she should have...."

Until I realized that as I was pointing my finger at the world around me, I could be using that energy to look at myself and my contribution and make changes in ME. With this shift in attitude I began to develop a deeper compassion for others (even those who have hurt me or done things we as a society know are unacceptable).

However, when I read about the atrocities in the world that continue to spin the wheel of suffering I wonder "what can we do about this"? How can we make change? War doesn't work! Hatred breeds more hatred! Judgment makes us look outside ourselves. Violence usually results in more violence. What we need is peace, compassion, patience, understanding and loving kindness. But these words do not imply passiveness!!! In fact, these words imply dedication, persistence, self-discipline and above all self-awareness! It's a hundred times more difficult to work for change from loving-kindness than it is to work from hate and violence.

How do we make this world a more peaceful place? By *being* more peaceful.

I'm still trying to bring more peacefulness in myself; it is a minute by minute practice of self-discipline and awareness.

At the same time I've been feeling a tug telling me to find a way to encourage others to find more peace within. A couple of nights ago it came to me that perhaps using the power of the internet, I could share my struggles and thoughts on the road to peace and perhaps inspire others to dedicate themselves to this path.

I imagine that if we can each strive to be more peaceful in ourselves that those around us will feel it and benefit, this peacefulness will spread and grow, eventually overpowering the opposite of peace. It may take thousands of years but we can only begin here, where we are right now!

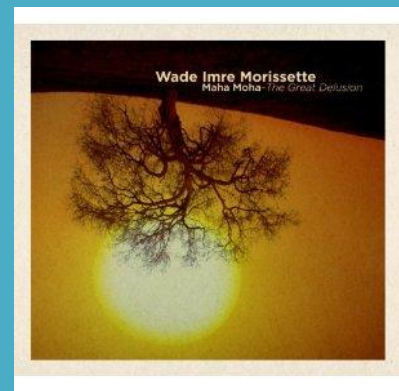
I have many excuses (too busy with yoga studio, my yoga practice, my kids, family, tired, etc) *not* to write these words to share with others but I'm committing myself to do more to encourage peace. Please join me!

Namaste,

Linda (June 8, 2010.)

### Inspiration:

One of my favorite cd's by Wade Morissette.



Asato Ma Sad Gamaya  
Tamaso ma Jyotir Gamaya  
Mrityor ma amritam gamaya  
Om shanti shanti shanti

Lead me from the unreal to the real  
Lead from the darkness to the light  
Lead me from death to immortality  
Let there be peace peace and  
peacefulness

## Judging on the Road to Inner Peace

Continuing on sharing ways I've managed to slowly, slowly find greater inner peace.

Judgment: It's easy to judge, we do it constantly. "I like this, I like that. She's wrong, he's right." How we love to spread our opinions; especially about others!

Rarely do we sit back and ask ourselves why we feel this need to criticize, take sides, gossip, label things, people or actions bad or good. I found myself getting caught up in this as much as anyone else. There's a strange satisfaction one gets when judging others, especially if we feel self-righteous or wronged somehow by another. But then I found that by engaging in this I get wound up and spin into other peoples mind stories. I have enough difficulty trying to clear my own mind of all the junk, why am I allowing someone else's stories in to clutter my mind and overall equilibrium even more?!

Then during a workshop my teacher, Ron Reid, said something that clicked: "I do not let others' judge me; my judgment comes from a higher place."

Yes, that's it! But to add to that: "I'm not going to judge *others*; I'm going to let *their* judgment come from a higher place."

When you accept the "imperfection" in yourself the need to gossip and judge others dissipates. Not saying you will allow others to treat you unfairly or poorly but you will not need to spread the gossip to others or get caught up in the mind dramas. You will be able to keep it between you and the other. You will be able to accept the "positive" and the "negative" in the other. Until enlightenment we will *all* say things we wish we didn't, do things less than virtuous, think less than loving thoughts and more. But just notice them with as much awareness and honesty you can muster, then *forgive*, love and continue your spiritual disciplines. Love will fill the heart; not hatred.

Indifference to the malicious actions, staying steady in yourself, knowing you (and others) are doing your best to follow the yogic path. Allowing only the judgments from a higher place. I believe that deep inside we feel the results of our actions, even if ever so subtle.

Remind yourself that the divine is in all (even if you cannot see it). Everything and everyone is an expression of God.

Admitting your wrong doings and faults frees you. No one is perfect we all deserve to be loved and forgiven.

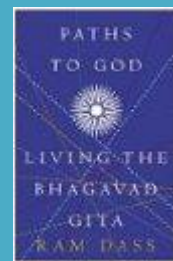
If someone is judging or gossiping about you; don't sink to that level. Common society may accept "an eye for an eye" but you don't have to participate in this. Stay true to your inner values. Even send them loving kindness meditation to help relieve them of their anger. This is a very powerful practice!

Lastly, quietly thank the person who wrongs you. They give you the opportunity to rise above it, forgive, see God everywhere and progress on your spiritual path!

I've written these words, you've read them; now let's make them more than mere words, let's live them! Let's spread love and kindness, not judgment (including to yourself!). (June 31, 2010.)

Inspiration:

Paths to God  
Living the Bhagavad Gita  
by Ram Das



"I was angry with them because I had a model of how I thought it *ought* to be, which was other than the way it was. How can you get angry at somebody for being what they are? You're trying to outguess God. They're just being what God made them to be – what are you getting angry about? Somebody lies to you? They're just doing their karmic trip. Why are you upset? Well, I didn't think they'd lie to me? Ah, expectations – there's your problem." p. 147