

PEACE – FOR THE SAKE OF HUMANITY

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23rd July 1939

Dear friend,

Friends have been urging me to write to you for the sake of humanity, but I have resisted their request because of the feeling that any letter from me would be an impertinence.

Something tells me that I must not calculate, and that I must make my appeal for whatever it may be worth. It is quite clear that you are today the one person in the world who can prevent a war which may reduce humanity to a savage state. Must you pay that price for an object however worthy it may appear to you to be?

Will you listen to one who has deliberately shunned the method of war, not without considerable success?

Any way I anticipate your forgiveness, if I have erred in writing to you.

I remain your sincere friend

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi

Gandhi writes this letter to Hitler in 1939.ⁱ I hear it being read aloud by Sir Ben Kinglsey in the series 'Letters Live' on the internet. It is riveting. Powerful.

I am struck by Gandhi's honesty, humility, respect and equanimity. He was truly a person of peace.

My interest in the letter from Gandhi to Hitler was prompted by the question:

So, what does it mean to be a person of peace? I have been pondering this question all year. And looking for answers, resources, useful practices.

My thoughts gravitate to action and contemplation, for boots on and boots off.ⁱⁱ I have a need for both.

I can see value in writing letters to our members of parliament (Gandhi's letter a useful template), in protesting in the streets in a non-violent way, witnessing and acknowledging what is happening in Gaza and other places in the world. And I wonder about donations.

Who is the best organization to donate to? I have found a new organization called the United Nations Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund ([WPHF](#)) which supports local grassroots women's organizations in conflict and crisis settings worldwide.

Where are the pockets of peace in this seeming sea of despair? Why doesn't our media report on peace initiatives?

In my search for a broader understanding of peace I have been encouraged by so many thoughtful reflections, ideas and practical actions where there is a profound understanding of peace both within ourselves and in the broader community. I have discovered that there are peace initiatives all over the world.

I watch a dialogue between Ami Dar and Ali Abu Awwadⁱⁱⁱ, an Israeli and Palestinian Peace activist respectively. They are grounded in the lived reality of conflict. Their presentation is inspiring. Their analysis and understanding is that the only way forward is peace.



"Nonviolence is our identity, it's the art of our humanity, and the best celebration of our existence."

Andréa Ranae Johnson on her presentation 'How to create Peace in our World'^{iv} speaks about peace as a practice, not an outcome. Peace requires the embrace of difference and embracing all parts of ourselves. She talks about love being a revolutionary act required for peace. And she has hope.

'Hope does not come at the expense of reality. Instead, I look toward what's possible with truth at my feet and grief in my bones.'

And as I search for ways that people promote peace, I find that spiritual teacher Cynthia Winton-Henry^v finds dance a useful tool in making space for forgiveness and nonviolent conflict resolution. She writes *'Movement can help recenter you in your body and unlock your innate wisdom. This peace is the peace to be who you are without worry. It is a personal peace that loosens you and brings you back to the heartbeat of humanity. To develop peace in yourself makes you the best peace mediator you can be.'*

I have looked far and wide to satisfy my intellect and to grasp the concept of peace in the real world. And my search for peace, ultimately brings me back home. Home to the still point within. While I desire to be a person of action, I know that this must come from embracing peace and conflict in my own heart first.

In the quiet stillness of our time together in contemplation each day between 4 and 5 pm, I sense that this is essential. That we can create a sacred field of energy – a field of peace.

As Ilia Delio says, *'If reality is nonlocal, that is, if things can affect one another despite distance or space-time coordinate, then nature is not composed of material substances but deeply entangled fields of energy; the nature of the universe is undivided wholeness.'*^{vi}

In Richard Rohr's meditation on quantum entanglement: sacred fields of energy he writes *"Consciousness, desire and intentionality matter...We must deliberately choose to be instruments of peace – first of all in our hearts and minds.'*^{vii}



I recently ask a friend, a young woman healer who has a deep connection to the land – she grows organic flowers and vegetables and is rehabilitating her country property - about peace. When I ask her what she understands by being a person of peace she replies: 'I think it means doing what you are called to be and to do in this life.' Simple. Profound. I think she is right.

For me this includes our quiet time together as a part of the Contemplative Evolution Network. To spend this time with love and intention for ourselves, for our world, for the places of darkness and for the sake of humanity.

ⁱ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nzh-QrFPcuQ>

ⁱⁱ Boots, Cracked pots and a Place at the Table – Mercy in a World Becoming by Madeline Duckett RSM.

ⁱⁱⁱ [An Israeli and a Palestinian Talk Peace, Dignity and Safety | Ali Abu Awwad and Ami Dar | TED \(youtube.com\)](#)

^{iv} [LaborDay24 AT LaborDay24 Single Custom No Logo@H1@SH21@TL1@BL1 1920x1080 FB/IG \(youtube.com\)](#)

^v Cynthia Winton-Henry, "Dancing Peace and Forgiveness," in *The Forgiveness Handbook: Spiritual Wisdom and Practice for the Journey to Freedom, Healing and Peace*, created by the editors at SkyLight Paths (Woodstock, VT: SkyLight Paths Publishing, 2015), 199, 201–202. [Inner Peace Dance—80 Percent Stillness – Richard Rohr's Daily Meditations \(youtube.com\)](#)

^{vi} [1] Ilia Delio, *The Francis Factor: How St. Francis and Pope Francis are changing the world*. (Center for Action and Contemplation: 2015), MP4 download.

^{vii} [Quantum Entanglement: Sacred Fields of Energy — Center for Action and Contemplation \(cac.org\)](#)