

March 2, 2007

Dear Peace friends,

We are now halfway through the Season for Non-Violence. We hope that you have had some opportunity to reflect and act on your own peaceful intentions as a result of this season. With the barrage of media reporting on negative and violent events it is sometimes hard to hold the thought that it is possible for us to truly create a culture of peace. We share with you the following excerpt adapted from *The Peace Book* to help you reflect and manifest peace in your life.

Peace is more than the absence of war, violence, or conflict, though that is an important first step. Peace is a presence--the presence of connection.

Inner peace is about connection with our true and natural self, and a sense of being part of something larger. This connection gives rise to serenity, balance, and a feeling of well-being. We connect to the living spirit of life within us all, that allows us to know all people as our brothers and sisters, and every living being – including the earth – a relative.

Peace with others is about our connection with the open heart, through which we remember our shared humanness. This brings us to the practice of conflict resolution, forgiveness, and reconciliation. We connect to the power of love that transcends fear, anger, sorrow, and aggression, and leads us to compassion and a desire to end the suffering of all. Through love, we find the path of nonviolence, for what hurts one hurts all.

Peace in our communities and in the world requires a connection to respect for our multiple differences, and for the right of all people to justice, freedom, and dignity. This leads to trust, community, and co-existence. We understand we are all in this together, that all people have the same basic needs and desires, and so we act for the common good rather than for the benefit of a few.

Peace is a state of mind and a path of action. It is a concept, a goal, an experience, a path. Peace is an ideal. It is both

intangible and concrete; complex and simple; exciting and calming. Peace is personal and political; it is spiritual and practical; local and global. It is a process and an outcome, and, above all, a way of being.

Ultimately peace is about the quality of our relationships — with ourselves and with others. How can we live together, in the smallest individual and family unit and in the largest network of peoples and nations, in ways that honor these connections and our presence together as dignified human beings?

A culture of peace results when we direct our lives on these principles of understanding. When this happens we will see a shift in the culture of peace in the everyday fabric of our lives. This is our peace wish to you.

The Peace Company team

Please join The Peace Company at:

Building a Culture of Peace Conference

Santa Fe, New Mexico, May 16 & 17, 2007

Louise Diamond, author of *The Peace Book: 108 Simple Ways to Make a More Peaceful World* is the design coordinator for this conference.

Join plenary speakers, Arun Gandhi, and Nobel Laureates Rigoberta Menchu Tum, Jody Williams, and H.H. the Dalai Lama (by video) in a 2 day inquiry on How we can build a culture of peace in our society. For more information go to www.santafepeace.org.

