

You can create your own peace garment

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I took high school home economics and spent an entire half-year completing an orange jumper that I never wore. Sewing always made me tense and everything turned out crooked. It was only later in my life that I saw I could mend and create in other ways, more suited to my own talents.

We might long for peace, pray for peace, and even make something beautiful in the name of peace. But if we cannot humble ourselves, let others be right, and be open to being wrong once in a while, the mending of our families will not occur. If we cannot seek forgiveness and offer it as well, the mending of our friendships will be illusive. And if we cannot respect our differences, even if they clash with our cherished beliefs, tastes and preferences, the mending of our communities and the world will remain a dream.

Like mending or sewing a garment, it might be more difficult for some than others, but every stitch makes for something lasting and strong. In your desire to create peace, consider the following "sewing tips:"

Rip out sarcasm. We are so in love with being clever. Mending a relationship is never helped by smart remarks. You may think that without your wit you aren't being you. But you're really just keeping the real you under wraps. Speak with an intention for harmony and you will get your peace garment started.

Weave in humility. It's amazing how many people can't just say, "I was wrong. Please forgive me." There are so many excuses and justifications and they merely tangle what might be "threads for peace."

Keep a pattern of perspective. When there is conflict of any kind, ask yourself, "Is this the hill I want to die on?" Remember what you really want: to mend and create peace. Pray when you are overwrought. Don't let your tongue or your temper run away with your peace cloth!

Stretch your material. Don't assume the worst about people. Look for the good, even in the "despicable." In Christianity the idea of the remnant is very strong. Where there is even a scant piece of cloth, with faith, courage, and diligence, material will grow, rips will be mended and something beautiful will be made.

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