

Begin With Me

“Let there be peace on earth”

Let me be free

“Let there be peace on earth

And let it begin with me”

-adapted from *Let There be Peace on Earth*

"In small places, close to home—so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighborhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination."—Eleanor Roosevelt

What this means is simple. It starts here, with me, in this moment. What I know for sure is this:

1. I am only in control of myself; therefore
2. I can only be responsible for changing myself
3. When something has been “done to me,” it is actually an outward expression of an inward struggle someone else is experiencing. IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH ME.
4. When I act or react to someone else, it is an outward expression of an inward struggle. IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THEM (and everything to do with me).

Therefore it stands to reason that if I want change in the world I can only enact that change in myself and have no right to expect someone else to change for me or in my direction.

There is a joyful freedom in releasing responsibility for other people and taking responsibility for myself. I own my emotions, I own my triggers, I create my life and have power over my reactions. I therefore don't have to worry about outside circumstances (national headlines, for example) because I know everything will be fine.

I'd like to share this with you in hopes that this perspective will motivate you to seek your own truths and recognize that we are all in this together, but cannot create for one another. We must each be responsible for ourselves in order to share in the harmony of life.

I have been witness to friendships lost, relationships compromised, love diminished, because one person tries to exert their will over another. “If you don't think my way, do my bidding, follow my lead, I will withdraw my love and punish you for exerting your own will.” Of course like many, my story begins with childhood, but has repeated itself over and over until I finally recognized the pattern and enacted on the lesson.

This choice to emotionally blackmail our loved ones may on the surface be shrouded in a cloak of helpfulness. We can feel proud that we are trying to elevate another to a higher way of thought or way of being because it's our way. But be careful to hear the ego of that statement. We all learn or don't learn our own lessons in our own way and time. It is not up to you to create my way based on your way. And yes, I recognize the paradox of this lesson as I am writing it.

So why write it? Because Spirit has moved me to do so, and I recognize that these are not my words, I am only a vehicle through which these words can be expressed. If you are reading this right now, it is because this is a lesson for you to consider, and then do with what you will. You may take it and learn from it now, or come back to it when the time is right. Imagine the world when every one of us is able to release our responsibilities for creating someone else's existence and take responsibility for our own.

So, let there be peace on earth, I will begin with me.