

Reflections for *The Inward Work of Civil Discourse*

Frederic Craigie, PhD, Nevola Symposium, June, 2018

If you love peace, then hate injustice, hate tyranny, hate greed... but hate these things in yourself, not another. (Mahatma Gandhi)

Act as if you always had compassion and then you will find you always did. (Robert Baker Aitken, 1917-2010)

Everything you are against weakens you. Everything you are for empowers you. (Wayne Dyer, PhD)

The heart of most spiritual practices is simply this: Remember who you are. Remember what you love. Remember what is sacred. Remember what is true. Remember that you will die and that this day is a gift. Remember how you wish to live. (Wayne Muller)

Hate for hate only intensifies the existence of hate and evil in the universe. If I hit you and you hit me and I hit you back and you hit me back and go on, you see, that goes on ad infinitum. It just never ends. Somewhere somebody must have a little sense, and that's the strong person. The strong person is the person who can cut off the chain of hate, the chain of evil. And that is the tragedy of hate, that it doesn't cut it off. It only intensifies the existence of hate and evil in the universe. Somebody must have religion enough and morality enough to cut it off and inject within the very structure of the universe that strong and powerful element of love. (MLK)

Self-awareness... involves understanding how my outlook affects the way I see the world and how it affects the world itself. This self-aware life does not accept that there is a private world of introspection and a public world of action. It insists that my interaction with the world includes my attitudes as well as my actions. This approach refuses to accept the modern belief that something is good so long as it does no harm to others. My own inner world is a place that can do harm or do good not only to myself but to other people as well. (Christopher Jamison, Abbot President, English Benedictine Congregation)

In the school of life, difficult people are the faculty. They teach us our most important spiritual lessons, the lessons that we would be most unlikely to learn on our own. (Mark Rosen)

I feel like my whole life is a spiritual practice. My interactions with people on the street, the people I work with, with my family. How much can I be open and honest in each moment? How can I be less compartmentalized? I want to give back and mentor others and try to make the lives of other people better, to know that we are all community. To be on a spiritual path means to me that actions count, thoughts count, everything matters. (Cynthia Ginsberg)

You can't hate someone whose story you know. (Anonymous, cited by Margaret Wheatley, Turning to One Another)

We're not on our journey to save the world but to save ourselves. But in doing that you save the world. The influence of a vital person vitalizes. The world without spirit is a wasteland. (Joseph Campbell)

Make room for fear, guilt, worry and sadness in your life, and then do what is right regardless of how you feel. If you wait to act until you feel like acting, you may wait forever. You may not be able to control your feeling, but you can control your behavior. Act constructively regardless of how you feel. Learn from your feelings; don't be bullied by them. (Rabbi Rami Shapiro)

There is now scientific evidence that going through life with a loving and forgiving attitude can affect our health in a positive way. There is growing evidence that when we live a life attached to anger, grievances, judgments and negative attitudes, we create conditions for poor health and delayed or stifled healing. It is important to emphasize that our thoughts and attitudes affect our bodies, minds, hearts and lives. As difficult as it may seem, we can always choose to be peaceful no matter what is happening around us. (Gerald Jampolsky, MD, Diane Cirincione, PhD)

We share responsibility for creating the external world by projecting either a spirit of light or a spirit of shadow on that which is other than us. We project either a spirit of hope or a spirit of despair, either an inner confidence in wholeness and integration or an inner terror about life being diseased and ultimately terminal. We have a choice about what we are going to project, and in that choice we help create the world that is. Consciousness precedes being, and consciousness can help deform, or reform, our world. (Parker Palmer)

If you don't have peace within yourself, it is very hard to work for peace. The other person is not our enemy. Our enemies are misunderstanding, discrimination, violence, hatred and anger. If you are filled with anger, you create more suffering for yourself than for the other person. When you are inhabited by the energy of anger, you want to punish, you want to destroy. You try to bring peace to yourself first. When you are calm, when you are lucid, you will see that the other person is a victim of confusion, of hate, of violence transmitted by society, by parents, by friends, by the environment. When you are able to see that, your anger is no longer there. (Thich Nhat Hanh)

Hope is a state of mind, not of the world. Hope, in this deep and powerful sense, is not the same as joy that things are going well, or willingness to invest in enterprises that are obviously heading for success, but rather an ability to work for something because it is good, not because it stands for a chance to succeed. (Vaclav Havel)

The enemy is fear. We think it is hate; but it is fear. (Gandhi)

Love is inside us, just waiting to be unleashed. The darkness is an invitation to light, calling forth the spirit in all of us. Every problem implies a question: Are you ready to embody what you say you believe? Can you reach within yourself for enough clarity, strength, forgiveness, serenity, love, patience and faith to turn this around? That's the spiritual meaning of every situation; not what happens to us, but what we do with what happens to us and who we decide to become because of what happens to us. The only real failure is the failure to grow from what we go through. (Marianne Williamson)

Love, compassion and concern for others are the real sources of happiness. With these in abundance, you will not be disturbed by even the most uncomfortable circumstances. If you nurse hatred, however, you will not be happy even in the midst of wealth. So if we really want happiness, we must widen the sphere of love. This is both religious thinking and basic common sense. (HH the Dalai Lama)

Throughout life, keep asking yourself, "What would I do right now, in this situation, if I were guided by my life purpose? What would I be doing differently at this moment?" The more mindful you are of your life purpose, the greater its impact will be on your life and the lives of those you care about. (Matthew McKay, PhD, John Forsyth, PhD, Georg Eifert, PhD)