

Talks on Peace – Forum Enlightenment

Inner Peace Is the True Peace

Interview with Sri Mooji

The main subject we want to explore is the correlation between inner peace, one's own inner silence, and outer peace—world peace, peace in a country, peaceful living. Where is the connection and how much can our own inner peace actually help to influence outer peace?

Inner peace is the true peace. There is no lasting outer peace that does not arise from inner peace. Outer peace cannot be sustained if it is merely phenomenal. It will not be stable if it belongs to the efforts of human beings as is expressed through their ideals and philosophies, treaties and peace accords. It has never been stable because whatever arises in the realm of time and change is by nature changeful. That is the nature of phenomenality—it is always fluctuating, it will always change.

Inner peace is altogether different. It is the peace that is not dependent upon time. It is before time. It is there in spite of time. It is not produced by time and it cannot end by time. It is not an achievement. It is not that someone has achieved peace; it means that one has realized themselves as that very peace itself. It is not someone *with* peace; it is the Being itself. The Being and peace are synonymous. Inner peace is the great peace.

Now, to be clear, inner peace does not mean being verbally quiet. There is often a misunderstanding that by not speaking, you are at peace. But we all know that this is not true. There are some beings who have committed heinous crimes who hardly spoke. They certainly were not peaceful beings. So simple physical quietness and stillness does not amount to any type of peacefulness. Inner peace is so profound, so all-encompassing that when it is recognized inside oneself, the actions, words and even thoughts that arise from the Being carry the fragrance or energy of peace in them.

Many seem to have this idea that inner peace and silence means non-action, to be passive. Would you agree that, on the contrary, by finding inner peace, you can trust that the right actions will come out of one's being rather than being in a state of non-action?

Yes. It is a common misunderstanding that inner peace is contradictory to activity. Many people feel that if they sit quietly and don't move, they will attain peace, or they will come across as being peaceful. But that is getting it altogether wrong. That is not peacefulness, that is just sitting and not moving. Peacefulness does not mean the absence of sound or movement. It means the absence of involved thought. It means that you are without ego, without attachment, not ruled by identity or conditioning. It is a space altogether apart.

We see that the activity of the world is always changing, always moving, but does that equate to a lack of peace or noise? No, movement is not noise. Noise is something more psychological. It has to do with the mind, and not being in harmony or in balance with the heart—the true nature of humanity. Noise is a kind of psychological overtone that comes when one's mind is not sitting inside the heart. When this imbalance is there, it creates psychological and sometimes even physical noise that is jarring. This indicates that the action is not arising from peace. The action that arises as the cosmic unfolding, the action that comes spontaneously from the heart of being, does not bring noise. It is action, it is activity, it is movement, but it is not noise. It is the perfect soil from which intelligent and harmonious existence can germinate, sprout and flourish. When the very foundation is blessed, then the fruits—peace, love and harmony—will be abundant.

That action that arises as the cosmic unfolding, as you say, seems to take many shapes. Is it not a contradiction that it can manifest in so many different, opposing ways—from a saint who stays totally isolated in the forest to somebody like Gandhi, who is very active in a non-violent way, to others, like Auruobindo, who encouraged active resistance against evil, or Arjuna, who took up arms? What is the right practice here, the right philosophy to apply?

Peace has nothing to do with philosophy. It has nothing to do even with practice. Practice can only be to avoid that which causes disturbance, but it cannot be to be truly peaceful. Peace is not something that you can acquire or practice; you can only realise it. You can only see that it is there as the substratum, the underlying reality behind the façade of human thinking and endeavour. We are immersed in peace. Peace is our nature, in fact, but it seems to be eclipsed by this fascination of the psychological mind to achieve, acquire, manipulate and all of these things. But actually, it's quite apart from that.

When we hear of beings like Sri Mahatma Gandhi, his work is an expression of the divine, and it continues reaching out, for when something emerges from the Divine, it never really ends but rather its goodness continues to manifest in countless ways, which in the end become untraceable to the worldly mind. So far reaching are the ways of the Supreme. Something inside moved him to express through active non-violence, but inside his heart, there would not have been an independent doer, as such, because harmony is a field of being rather than an autonomous agent.

There are also examples of realised beings who sit in caves or on top of mountains and have little reaction to the outside world. They may not even seem to enjoy human company, but such beings radiate spiritual oxygen to the benefit of all. In the same way, a tree doesn't say, 'I'll give you oxygen because I like you.' It gives to everyone. The sun doesn't shine on nice people and not on nasty ones—it shines on all. It is not that something inside a realised being has made an active decision to radiate peace and love on all; the light just springs forth from the heart of being, effortless in its abundance, in alignment with God's will. It is so beautiful and

beyond human comprehension. It underlies everything and shines in the heart of every living being.

There are also those beings like Arjuna, who immediately after satsang with his guru, Lord Krishna, went into battle. Arjuna's violent actions might seem against the spirit of peace as conceived in the mind, but we must be mature enough to see that there is also space for this type of movement in the dance of consciousness—as from this satsang on the battlefield arose the *Bhagavad Gita*, one of the world's great spiritual gifts. We must free ourselves from focusing on peace as an external state and move towards a deeper trust in the inscrutable nature of the Divine.

All of these ways of engaging with the world are the diverse expressions of consciousness. And none of them comprehensively define peace. None of them have the monopoly on peace. All these beings, varied as they are in their expression, emerge from the one source. Each may have discovered and moved from the space of peace within themselves, but we cannot say that the actions that sprang forth from one being were higher or truer than those of another. One expression of consciousness does not invalidate another.

No one has managed to define a universal philosophical framework for peace. There can be no such thing. Peace has no philosophy. Peace has no framework. There is no system that can guarantee peace. A light shines from the one who does not identify himself as a peacekeeper, but is instead merged with the peace that is our inherent nature. It is pure and timeless. It manifests in the world as benevolent action—the direct expression of divine grace. I often say, 'When you do what feels right inside your heart, it cannot turn out to be wrong for others.' Truth takes no sides. When your actions flow out from a heart of peace, it nourishes and nurtures the whole world.

So could you say the mistake, if you want to speak in terms of mistakes, would be to judge the expression rather than to look for the source of the expression?

Yes, the wise will always move from the source. Wisdom arises from the source and will always return you to the source. If you stay in the branches, you remain in time. You have to go to the root. So those who don't just philosophize about these things, but come into the direct experience, they will speak and act from and as the source itself.

And how does this manifest in the world?

They don't determine that. Actually, they are not separate from the source. The one who has realised their oneness with the source does not see themselves as functioning anymore as a separate entity. They are one with it. They themselves are the womb of expression. And although that expression may be in time, its source is timeless and ever-perfect. The magnitude of what this implies is hard for most to comprehend.

There is one specific point that seems to trouble many people: it is this attitude of surrender, of just letting things be, of accepting them as they are. This seems to be felt by many as laziness, and of not caring enough. Could you speak a little bit about this?

The action that comes from one who has awakened to the inner Truth is completely in harmony with the universal or cosmic unfolding. It's not that one becomes lazy and doesn't want to do anything. This may be a phase for a little while, but if it continues that way, it is surely due to misunderstanding. You cannot stay the same way because the nature of phenomenal manifestation is that it is always changeful. If someone tries to be always the same, it shows that they are living in great misunderstanding, great suppression and as a result, great unhappiness.

Until you *actually* realise the truth, you cannot help but speculate about these things. There is a perception that people who have let go into the depth, into the inner reality, may not want to do anything in the world. It may indeed feel like that in the beginning when one first experiences the vastness of the inner kingdom, of the pure Self. It is not bound by activity, but it is also not against activity. It plays through activity, and yet it is itself unmoving. Sometimes we say it is the unmoving within the moving, the invisible within the visible. But only the one who is in the direct experience of this can grasp intuitively the profundity of such insights.

As you let go into your inmost being, you discover you are only letting go of the ignorant and arrogant sense of individual autonomy. And you will only do this as you begin to experience for yourself that there is an order in the universe, a power that takes care of it. It's not that you are becoming lazy. On the contrary, you are becoming truly alive. And this aliveness is in greater service to existence than someone who acts merely from their own projections, personal mythology or philosophy.

What would you say if someone feels a strong aspiration to contribute to world peace? Can he go with that feeling, or would you still always say to look first for his own peace, for his own self?

If I say, 'You must first stop and look within,' to someone who is driven by a stronger urge to act immediately according to their own impulse about working towards world peace, my words would be taken as oppressive. To such a one I would not say these things because they would not be able to hear them. These impulses, arising from one's present level of understanding and maturity, may need to be expressed as part of a necessary and unavoidable pulse of existence, which we later come to see bear unexpected fruits.

If I feel there is space to look further, and I feel I am in the company of one who is open and searching for the deepest or purest understanding, then the conversation will perhaps lead to a deeper degree of insight—to a seeing of that which underlies all striving towards world peace. But if I see in one that the urge to act based on

their own projections is quite pronounced, I can only say, 'Best wishes and go with full blessings.'

And what would you say to those who do actually have the belief that by finding inner peace they will contribute to world peace? And how would the finding of that inner peace be expressed?

By finding inner peace, you *will* contribute to world peace, but not intentionally or deliberately. Your very presence will evoke and invoke peace in your environment. I'm not sure if we can really comprehend how tremendous that is. It's much more powerful than some great speaker, or preacher or politician declaring peace with all their might. To actually meet someone whose life is the evidence of Truth, whose being radiates peace itself, can touch you in such a profound way as to transform your very way of thinking about yourself, life and the world—it is not something that can be easily explained.

My guidance would be to find someone who is peaceful and sit in their company. And if you meet someone who is genuinely peaceful, I don't feel that you would even want to ask them questions about peace. You would rather bathe in their peace, in the fragrance of their Being. Often in the world we talk *about* peace, but you have to find, discover and *be* that peace—not as an act of determination. As a consequence of your own intuitive understanding and insight, you become the thing you seek.

When you find inner peace, you are spontaneously in the realm of the divine. When you search for how that peace should be used, you are pulled back in the world of man and mind. The one who discovers that they are peace itself becomes an empty vessel through which the divine expresses magnificently. And we have not seen many examples of this. That is why we mention a Buddha, a Gandhi, an Aurobindo, a Ramana Maharshi or a Christ—beings who walked this planet long ago. And now that we are nearly 8 billion human beings on the planet, we must find examples amongst this lot.

So by finding one's Truth, one may or may not have an outward role to play in the world in terms of creating peace?

One may or may not have a role that is outwardly perceived and appreciated in that way. Nevertheless, one's presence will be imbued with not just peace, but wisdom, love, joy, equanimity and fearlessness. These are the true examples of the possibility of the human spirit.

This thing about world peace is largely based upon spiritual romanticism. There has never been world peace. There have been many peaceful beings who have strengthened and inspired the world. They have opened the door of understanding and insight, saying, 'This is possible for you. You need not worship me. Worship that from which I come, and which is in your own heart.' This is the real peace, and this

peace is timeless. It has no enemies. Even at the moment, as it sits in your heart, it has no enemies. Your heart has neither enemies nor friends.

It is the mind that is disturbed by that which is not peaceful. It is the mind that is searching for peace, and it will find it not by strenuous practices and beautiful philosophies, but by plunging inwardly to discover its own true nature and source. But don't try and use this peace. Don't try even to be used by it. Just discover it. And so if you are open enough that you discover that which is greater than anything you could have ever imagined, you will bow down spontaneously at the feet of That, and be absorbed in It completely.

I know that for many trying to create peace in order to make the world a better place is a very, very enticing idea—but find inner peace first. And then see what peace wants, not what 'you' want. You are not peaceful; that is why you search for peace. If you were peaceful, you would not search for peace. So at least come to peace without strategy. Don't turn to peace to get something, to do something to satisfy your intentions or projections about peace. First find peace. And then looking out through the eyes of peace you may rightly judge what is lacking in the world.

How did your own awakening impact the way you engage with the world?

It showed that I was not actually engaged with the world before. I may have been obsessed with it, I may have been after some aspect of it, but I saw that I wasn't engaging with it in any truthful way. I was just a creature of conditioning for the most part.

In discovering that there is a power here greater than the power I had considered to be myself, I was completely floored. Nothing I had seemed of value anymore. To be touched in such a way, to be kissed from within like that was so powerful. I had nothing to offer it. But still, I offered up myself. And I didn't even have to think about it—it was so immediate. There was no time or urge to reflect in any mental way, 'Is this good for me?' I just knew it immediately. I just wanted and chose to give up everything for this. And my whole life has been unfolding in that attitude of surrendering and recognising this power, which I call God, which, for me, is synonymous with Pure Awareness, Being, and Absolute Reality.

This direct experience also took a lot of violence out of my mind. I would not have considered myself a violent person, but I believe every living being has some violence in them, violence perhaps they don't know anything about. And so it completely pacified my heart, unified my Being and opened my eyes to panoramic proportions. I discovered a respect for life and for living beings, for every person, because I realised that what I had found inside my heart is present and alive in the heart of every sentient being. When you realize this, it is impossible to want to hurt anyone intentionally.

That does not mean that you would not challenge or confront some injustice. Some power inside moves with a greater sense of justice, order and truthfulness. It is not a vindictive power, but rather it offers corrective possibilities to expand in consciousness and intelligent existence. And it's all wrapped up in love, though not necessarily a very affectionate and fanciful love—it's much greater than that. I mean love in its expression as the unity of Being. A love that cares for everything.

It is unfathomable how it impacts the life in *every* way. In every way your life is enriched. In every way, not just your life, but the lives of many other people will be enriched through your realization of your true nature. Even the trees and water and all the elements are somehow happier because of the joy that you find.

The peace that you are searching for is already inside your heart. We only need to be aware of it. It cannot be created. Peace was never created. It is the perfume of the living God, of Truth. Peace is our natural fragrance. Just like one cannot separate the smell of a rose from the flower itself, similarly, love, joy, wisdom, perfect understanding and harmony are one with us. They are our heart's fragrance, but we have to be aware of them to release their potency. Our nature is to be happy—not pretend happy, not to act happy, but to be joy itself. But we acquire, through poor conditioning and false identity, a sorrowful posture—emotionally, mentally, psychically—and we are living like beings who have lost their way.

If there is work here, it is just the work of one's being to correct these misconceptions and to guide the mind back to its source so that it is happy again. Happy beings don't cause trouble. Countless lives are transformed by someone who is genuinely happy, someone who is happy and peaceful in any and every condition. They are not happy 'because of', they are happy 'in spite of'. And I don't say they don't have the capacity to feel sorrow, and especially compassionate sorrow in which they feel drawn to beings whose lives can be improved by greater understanding.

The very presence of one who has discovered the peace that is their own Self raises the level of the collective consciousness. This should be the real goal when we speak about peace. If we are speaking only about a phenomenal peace, about a country being at peace, there is an inherent instability. We have had many examples of countries which seem to be very much at peace then suddenly breaking out in war and no one can really explain why.

If it is in your heart, you can continue to work for world peace. It is itself an expression of compassionate consciousness. But alongside this you must also search for true peace inside yourself. There is no true happiness, no true peace to be found externally. When true peace is found within you, it makes many things right without effort, manipulation or cleverness. Happiness and peace don't need politics. They don't need religion. Peace doesn't need. When you are without need, you find peace.

I sometimes wonder if my responses will please people. These words are not here to please, but more to enlighten, to bring light and clarity to a topic which is a global concern. But this can happen only if you are open. If you have some fixed ideas in your mind, then not even God can speak to you directly. Instead he has to speak to you through slaps and kicks. At least strive to be more open and not so tight-fisted or tight-headed.

I often say, 'Don't make tattoos out of any concept.' See where they point—reflect, contemplate, meditate, but don't hold them fast like they are truths in themselves. They can only point the way because Truth is really beyond concept—it is the true spirit, unalterable. It seems that the mind, which we venerate so much, has lost hold of the Truth, which is ourSelf. But this can be corrected. There are always beings on the planet, in every age, who are here to assist, to encourage and to inspire the world back into real and lasting happiness and peace. But this happiness and peace cannot be based on mere phenomenality, they have to be grounded in Truth. We must find that peace which is timeless and causeless.

Thank you so much.

[Laughs] Thank you, thank you. I am very happy with these questions, and I bless everybody that their minds turn more and more towards their heart and discover the Truth while their body is still warm. While we have the sense of time, let us discover what is timeless.

May every being who sincerely searches for the Truth, may your mind remain open so that you find it in its completeness within yourself. May you know that the great miracle of existence is to discover your true nature, which is within your own Self, in your heart—and discover it to such an extent that those who meet you along the way are so deeply touched by what radiates from you: your peace and joy and openness, your silence and space, your grace and compassion, that they in turn will find that yearning, that inner stirring that guides them home to their everlastingness.

So be it. Amen.