



SEEDS OF PEACE

Writings of peaceful living for sharing with all.

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(Cape Cod Branch)





Seeds of Peace



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Seeds of Peace 01-Greetings



These writings shared of thoughts, feelings and stories are born from a womb of internal guidance and experiences from paths travelled, as a simple, imperfect human. The themes center around people respect, earth respect, peaceful growth, potential evolvment and possible choices.

There is no intent of harm or disrespect. Please forgive any misunderstanding of intent. Change can only come from our personal choice to do so. We each have our own path to follow and hear our own song in the winds.

My earth journey has been to plant seeds through writing, journeys and in circle gatherings. Seeds are sown. Something may sprout or may not. In Native American tradition and similar in other cultures, 5 seeds may be planted. Two may be eaten by birds or small animals. Two may be lost to weather. With care, fortune and blessing, one may grow into a healthy plant bringing new gifts to earth.

If we replace status quo micro-view limitations we have been taught, with open thoughts of our incredible potential and possibilities of a world family of people and earth, we have boundless potential. Hopefully, we can share our individual and collective dream process, discovering creative new thought and paths to a giving, fair, peaceful, inclusive circle of all...one people, one earth.

It might work best to read, think about, feel about 1-2 of the 'seeds' at a time. They could be used in group sharings or as a teaching tool. They could also serve as an inspirational basis for talks or sermons.

The messages are freely shared. If something feels connective or special: print it; copy it; email it; web it; share it by social media or whatever means you wish. We must reach out and reach wide, expanding the circle of people actively embracing the sharing and energy of a peaceful coexistence and a healthy earth. Whatever our collective prevailing energy is, is what the world is at that time (love, fear, peace, violence, equality, exclusion, etc.). Help it be with the positive energies.

I am with Stage IV cancer, writing and sharing peace seeds that hopefully find fertile ground. These are likely my last writings. Please feel free to share with others. Let us open our hearts to fulfill our amazing potential.

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Seeds of Peace 02- Seed Growth

The following shows how seeds planted can grow and spread.

In 1995, i was part of a Native guided cross-country walk for the earth and people. It was an amazing journey camping and walking over 5 million steps from Cape Cod (MA) to Hopi-land (AZ). I made up the following prayer to say to myself while walking many miles each day:

***Creator, open our hearts to peace and healing between all people.
open our hearts to provide and protect for all children of the earth.
open our hearts to respect for the earth and all the gifts of earth.
open our hearts to end exclusion, violence, and fear among all.
Thank-you for the gifts of this day and every day.***

We all have these gifts within. It is opening our hearts fully to them.

After the walk, i posted the prayer on the ‘new internet’ in 1996. Except for a couple of early inquiries asking to use it, and not having computer access for some years, it was just out there. In late 2017, someone tracked me down to use. Doing a browser search, i found it has been used continuously for over 20+ years, by various circles, a State legislature, a reggae newsletter, church groups, addiction groups, cancer groups, Native groups, immigration groups, craft/art projects on Pinterest, and many others in the U.S. and around the world. In October 2017, it was used to open a large conference in Vegas a few days after the horrible mass shooting there. In 2018, it was made into a beautiful short choral anthem for choirs by Augsburg Fortress Publishing, with composer Andrew Birling.

The prayer has found its way to all these people, groups and places for many years and is still growing and spreading.

It shows we should not get discouraged. If we give sincere efforts, don’t worry. The seeds we plant are doing good even if we do not know it right away or never find out about it. Know you are not alone. There are many working for peace.

Believe in your efforts. I believe in them and you.





Seeds of Peace 03 – Hope

Hope is our lifeblood, the core of our survival, the seed of dreams and the energy of change. We are gifted with hope to find our spiritual connection in the sacred hoop of all life. All are invited. The door of the circle is open to enter---white, black, yellow, red, brown, young, old, rich, poor, straight, lgbtq, city, country, abused, abuser, oppressed, oppressor. I once saw a wild hawk and a domestic kitten sitting on a fence rail together on the Seneca Reservation in Western New York. The hawk was being released after being injured. It showed how all can peacefully coexist. We can mend the hoop, that has been injured in many ways, creating a new hoop, a circle of all people, with respect for all of and upon earth.

Mother Earth is giving strong warnings through larger floods, quakes, droughts, fires, tornadoes, hurricanes and other events, warning of the damage we've done to the earth and ourselves. It is not mystical. The earth is ill from our poisons. When we are ill, we expel the virus in nasty ways. Earth is doing the same. We have drilled into her core and stripped away protective soil, trees and other foliage. We have seriously polluted her air, soil and water that sustains all life.

One who has excluded from ill-taught prejudicial fears can be open to inclusion for all. One who has been excluded can open to forgiveness. One of greed can open to sharing. One of poverty can open to having need fulfilled without greed. All the paths to the sacred hoop are open. There is hope each will choose to follow the path into the circle of all. *Hope is present. Hope is here.* Its dreams can only awaken by willing choice. *Each of us has choice to open or close our hearts to the family of all.* No matter where we stand, there are four primary directions to choose. We each have responsibility of which path we choose.

Keep the HOPE. Fan the flame of HOPE from its embers to become a bright light of energy. Follow the path to its center. Awaken the HOPE to become reality. *Share and others learn sharing. Care and others learn caring. Be peaceful and others learn peace. Be compassionate and others learn compassion. Be inclusive and others learn to include. Be loving and others learn to love.*





Seeds of Peace 04 – Peace

Hear the cry of the earth and its people. There are peacemakers of all different colors, cultures, ages, and religions here now.

More are being awakened. Whether from Indigenous spirituality, Judeo-Christian, Far Eastern, Muslim, agnostic yearning, peace-social justice-environmental-human rights activists, all are here, working and waiting for our potential and evolvement to be fulfilled. The time is upon us. We choose peace or not every hour of every day. The road to real peace has much challenge and sacrifice but is not the road of stress, fear, violence and evil we live with equally difficult?

“It isn’t enough to desire peace. We must pray for it, believe in it and work for it.”

Eleanor Roosevelt

Peace is not an absence of war, nor time between wars. *It is its own energy, an active state of being, a way of living.* Peace has no anger, nor judgment, grudges, exclusions, prejudices, separation, greed nor fear. Peace is the unconditional acceptance and inclusion of all people sharing the unique gifts we each bring to the circle of people. Peace is what we think of, say about and do for or to each other every day. It is global peace, national peace, community peace, household peace and peace within each person. Peace is absent of physical violence, economic violence, social violence, verbal violence and environmental violence. Peace is active with positive actions.

We do not embrace peace if we hold anger at ex-spouses, parents, children, neighbors, co-workers or others in our personal circles. We fully embrace peace, or we do not. It is a vital understanding for each word, thought or deed of anger we hold or expose becomes part of the world’s collective energy.

We each choose. We each have an involvement. Even sitting on the sidelines is still a choice of continuing where we are. True peace is not impossible by any means. Peace sits within us and all around us, waiting for us to embrace it and manifest fully through our collective energies. Be the peace. Share the peace. *If you wish peace in the world, be peaceful, fully and unconditionally.*





Seeds of Peace 05 – Diverse Unity

One day, Clarinets were squealing. Trumpets were blaring. Drums were booming. Flutes were shrilling. Cellos were sawing. Violins were screeching. Cymbals were clanging. Trombones were loudly yawning, and tubas were oom-pah-pahing at everyone. The noise was just awful, like fingernails on a chalkboard. It hurt everyone's ears.

Piano couldn't stand it any longer, and so Piano wrote a composition with a part for each of to play. All decided to try it, except Violin. It was beautiful, becoming a wonderful rhythm and blend of different sounds with one harmonic voice.

Piano asked Violin why she didn't want to join in? She said, "I'm Violin, and don't want to be something different." Piano replied, "My dear friend, if you join the orchestra you are still Violin, sounding like Violin, and playing the part of Violin, in harmony with those around you."

Cooperation versus Chaos

We don't lose our individual identity by being part of the whole. It is the mosaic blending of our identities that creates a beautiful symphony versus noisy clatter. When John Lennon's *Imagine* came out it was deeply misunderstood. People could not "*imagine no countries and no religion too.*" He was writing and singing to the being of oneness, of removing barriers. Economics, politics, commerce, ecology, all are interwoven globally. For some it is scary, of losing identity, but it is not so.

We are one people, sharing one home of earth, to be a harmonic orchestra. There is a beautiful, universal composition written for all the world to play, each a part, but blended together. It is up to each of us to be part of it, as a symphonic orchestra, or continue creating chaotic noise in our segregated corners. We need not fear losing ourselves in global cooperation, for it is an enhancement of ourselves. We each choose if our homes, communities, country and world will be harmonic or chaotic. Embrace 'diverse unity'.

As each person becomes peaceful, the world becomes more peaceful.





Seeds of Peace 06 – Trail of a Human Being

Walking across the country, there were many lessons....

>Walking carelessly stepping on an insect or seeing ‘road-kill’ animals struck by cars, there was the realization of harming living creatures, even if we do not mean to, who have a right and purpose to be here, as we each do. Regret and offering is made for the unintentional losses we create in life.

>Walking clumsily, tripping over my feet, falling, getting hurt but getting up again, as we all must get up when we trip, or are tripped and fall. Bruises will heal. We cannot let physical or psyche bruises and hurts stop our human progress.

>Walking long miles, knees hurting, muscles tiring, but go on, as we all face pains and difficulties and must go on. The call to go on gets us past the pain & difficulty.

>Walking with a ‘sunshine smile’, singing, dancing along, bringing an energy of life, of joy within that we must all reach within for and share with the world.

>Walking wet in the rain, knowing the sun will always return, bringing warmth and light. All is a cycle; all is a circle. Day becomes night; winter becomes summer; young becomes old; ill becomes healthy; the circles of life go on.

>Walking hungry or thirsty, but knowing i’d survive and find provision, realizing millions through the world suffer immense, on-going daily thirst and hunger without finding provision. *Not having is nothing for a path chosen, but everything for a life denied*, an invisible statistic of tragedy and suffering ignored by others.

We are all part of the earth walk. We all walk together, in laughter, tears, fears, harmony, discord, scarcity, abundance. We are each part of the whole.

Walk for the opening of hearts to peace and healing for all people, for all children, for all of the earth. Follow the trail of a true human being.





Seeds of Peace 07 – Forgiveness

Earth healing and people healing are interwoven. One cannot happen without the other. We may carry hurts from past or current relationships, or harbor grudges centuries old from hurts to our ancestors. Hurt has rained on many people. There are few people, if any, untouched from hurt in one form or another.

We must *release our hurts*. There is no need to forgive. To forgive means we hold a judgment against someone. Forgiveness is not a virtue. It is an issue of control, ego and pride. It is holding, ‘Forgiveness’ over someone like a club. It is destructive. It usually harms the one withholding forgiveness more than the party of perceived offense. It also harms those in the circles of both parties. Most negatives by others towards us are from lack of knowledge, misdirected fears, misintention, misinformation, misunderstanding, or just ‘someone having a bad day’. It is understanding we are each doing the best we can at that moment. It is not to be angry at these instances, but to understand their source. Their action may hurt us. Process the hurt and release it, quickly. Do not let it transform into anger and long-term, harmful forgiveness control. Let it go.

There is no more time waiting for millions of people to forgive millions of others. We are faced with critical challenges to undertake together. We need to let go of past negatives, personal and old national-racial-religious grudges. The earth needs healing. We need healing. We must release the hurts to open our hearts to new beginnings, by all - for all, and especially for the children of today and tomorrow.

When the Iroquois League of Nations was formed (est. 1450 AD), Deganawida the Great Peacemaker and Ayonotha cautioned, *“The council chiefs must have seven layers of skin, so as not to be offended by remarks of others. Grudges of the past must be left behind, or they will continue to be the wars of today and tomorrow.”*

The emotional pain we suffer is the pain we hang onto.





Seeds of Peace 08 – Bridges

There are many polarities. It is to be mindful of the bridges to cross from where we are to where we need to be. We do not often jump the span from loneliness to having a circle of connection. We must first seek out, be helpful to others, seek connection and connection will be found. As example:

POLARITY

Prejudice

Illness

Fear

Anger

Dissatisfaction

Conflict

Exclusion

Low esteem

Loneliness

BRIDGE

Tolerance

Healing

Risk

Letting go

Change

Communication

Connection

Trying new things

Seeking out

POLARITY

Acceptance

Wellness

Empowerment

Peacefulness

Satisfaction opportunity

Cooperation

Inclusion

Self-confidence

Connection

And so on...there's a bridge path between every human condition.

Crossing the bridge usually involves taking a risk, making a change. A physical helpful symbolism is to actually walk over a 'bridge' (or 'overpass'), visualizing the crossing over from one feeling or behavior to the other side. Maybe have a friend walk with you to talk about crossing your emotional bridge.

If there is no struggle, there is no progress....Frederick Douglass

Somewhere in our psyche most of us have a polarity area that does not serve us well. Find a 'bridge'. Cross-over to the other side. Once we cross a bridge, then we can help others find their way across. If you can, be a bridge. Help others get from one-side to the other to continue their journey.





Seeds of Peace 09 -Alternatives

Our peaceful task in shape-shifting the world is not to challenge or confront those we perceive as opponents. An approach of confrontation or accusation results in hardline defensive and counter-offensive energies by the other party. We are all one and must seek new paths as one. It is not to confront darkness, but to shine light into the darkness.

We choose to fight or flee at confrontation, but there is also the option of finding an alternative. Fight or flight results in separation, while finding alternatives brings together to find common ground. Do we seek ‘to beat’ others, ‘win’ against others, or find better ways?

Nothing is ever resolved by two parties yelling at each other, or mistrusting. Gun controls, abortion, legislative governing, religion, equality issues, environmental issues, and more, all have common ground that can be found if sought. Answers are there to see if we do not blind ourselves by fear, power or prejudices. Progress is taking steps towards realizing the ideal. All must take the steps together.

So much is polarized from stubborn extremes. If one party is rock set, then leave it for another time, find another way, *always staying in a peaceful state*. Fighting against a rock is a poor use of energy and only injures your hand. Peace is easy to attain. We make things difficult from our ego and pride.

From: Competition-Conflict-Confrontation

To: Communication-Connection-Cooperation

From: Fear-based rejection of each other

To: Love-based respect of each other

We are not opponents. Most all people are mutual seekers of truth, peace, prosperity and quality of life. These are shared roots of life for all.

Respect for each other and respect for the earth are the two simple seeds to grow people and earth healing, resulting in peace and human evolution. If we choose to follow these tenets, we will evolve to human wholeness and greatness. We are still at the beginning of evolving to our greatest potential. There is such beauty, wonder and fulfillment ahead if we open our hearts to it.





Seeds of Peace 10 – Living Reality

I have written messages of fully living peace, not having angers, not withholding forgiveness, giving to others, having respect and empathy for all, respecting Mother Earth and all her gifts, but is this reality? Can we truly live like this or is this pie-in-the-sky idealism?

Of course we can. It takes having an open heart. It means having some hurts along the way. It means letting go of egos to see through the eyes of others, trying to stand in their shoes to better understand so we don't let needless angers get in the way of our amazing evolvement potential. *It takes empathy.*

Being born transgender and knowing without doubt since age 3 (1950's), having to live a life of no life for decades, i could have been swallowed-up by angers and bitterness, but never let any of it enter my spirit, even though many, many hurts.

When I transitioned (early 90's) there were no discrimination protections for trans-people. There were not many of us known. All was taken, leaving me penniless without a home. I had utility companies and banks refuse me service for being trans. I had hundreds of employers close the doors of any job possibilities, even to work for a food pantry. When i had absolutely nothing left and no means to go on, i prayed and received a vision to walk across the country with messages of earth and people respect and did it. I've had a 'lot to carry' and have been dealt many discriminations with many wounds, *including living a long life of no-life* as most transgenders face. (It is getting slightly better for younger trans-people and kids but still a very, very long ways to go.)

If i can make it through 70 years of terrible challenges and exclusion with hurts by many and always maintain an unconditional nature of peace, without anger or forgiveness issues, while always trying to give what i can for a better world, then anybody can. I am no one special. I am just a human being doing the best i can. Being shut-out of all life, if i can be peaceful, anyone who wants to can. It is just deciding to be peaceful and then being so, unconditionally.





Seeds of Peace 11 – Thank-you

THANK – YOU.....

>to all the organizations and groups involved with issues of peace, nonviolence and earth-care, or help for the hungry, the excluded, ill, displaced, abused or forgotten. Thank-you for your efforts, your caring, for keeping all aware and for being there for those in need.

>to all the individuals: involved in social/environmental activism through groups, circles or individual acts. Thank-you for your compassion, reaching out, giving your time and for your gifts to the world.

>to all the volunteers: in hospitals, or delivering home meals to the elderly and disabled, in libraries helping children, helping in food pantries or with the homeless, helping in environmental needs, and all others who volunteer their time in the care of humanity and earth.

>to the young: the students who are concerned, involved, volunteering, helping to create a better world. Thank-you for your gifts of concern, youthful energy, new ideas and the courage to stand up. You are the hope for tomorrow.

>to the elderly: who have gotten us as far as you could during your time. It becomes the time of the younger to keep the progress going. We have not reached our potential yet, but each generation has brought us further along than where we were. Each generation must bring us closer to our full potential.

Do not feel alone or discouraged. There are many serving in a vast network building, growing, connecting. As roots take hold they will sprout through the earth, as a single energy of universal hope and peace for all.

THANK-YOU ALL.





Seeds of Peace 12 – Anger

Anger is a form of violence. It may be internal anger or used externally at others. Either way it is harmful. Why do we become angry? What does it serve?

We get upset by what someone has said or done. It may be a situation close and direct, like family, friends, work; or distant and indirect, like bureaucracies, politics, religion, business, media.

In most cases we are not looking deeply enough or don't have enough information. We may not know the other person's perspective because we are not them. We tend to see all through our eyes and lives, not others', so we don't understand why they are doing this or saying that. They are saying or doing based on their bio-genetics, their early life environment and their life experiences, not ours, so misunderstandings often result. The whys are there if we look deeper.

Even with something like politics. We may strongly disagree with the policy or rhetoric of a politician, but he/she was elected. Getting angry at the politician doesn't accomplish anything. Working to elect a different politician, or group efforts to change policies can be done peacefully without the anger.

Anger may urge us to act, but it is an angry urgency that will not create positive-based responses and if we hold anger in it will eat at us. It is best not to even have anger. It takes practice, but it is attainable. Always give the benefit of the doubt. A person (family, friend, clerk, whoever) may just be having a bad day or didn't fully understand a situation and reacted quickly or misconnected it with something like a fear or emotion in their life we don't know about. Anger is a needless, destructive energy that does not solve anything in the long run.



If we do not retaliate there is no 'war'. Do no harm in thought, word or deed.



Seeds of Peace 13- Balance

(Eagle story from book 'Open Our Hearts', A. Davis)

It is told there was an eagle living on the cliffs in the land of no grass. Each day, Eagle left the aerie, catching the west wind, circling towards the east. Eagle always used the right wing for power. The left wing was not used except to glide. The right wing became very strong, very powerful. Eagle was proud, circling high above all there was.

One day, Eagle caught the west wind as usual, circling out farther and higher. All of a sudden...the familiar wind changed. It just ceased quickly from the west and began gaining great speed from the east. Eagle was confused. The right wing was not working in this wind. The pattern of everything was different. Eagle tried using the left wing, but it was too weak. It had no strength because Eagle had ignored and dismissed the left wing. Eagle thought it had little value for Eagle's daily needs. Eagle never thought to use the gifts and strengths of the left wing.

Eagle crashed hard to the ground. It was a long time before able to fly far again. Eagle learned the lesson and now used both wings. Eagle learned to understand and appreciate the gifts of Balance; the gifts and strengths of both sides working in balanced harmony and cooperation.

This is the lesson for all humanity. Using the gifts of both sides. Male-Female energies in partnership, neither in dominion power over the other, nor exclusive of the other. Power structures must change to form a partnership structure of balance.

The masculine and feminine have societal strengths and gifts to contribute. To ignore or dismiss one hurts the whole. It is a balance of the male-female energy of all in the universe. *We are all born with biological and emotional aspects of male and female.* We must not let societal structures impose limitations or shut-out our fullness. The evolution of human potential, the fulfillment of our greatest intent, will occur as we balance societal institutions of government, commerce, religion, media, and ourselves, to realize the gifts of our internal fullness for all.

In balance we shall find our fullness, completion and harmony with all.





Seeds of Peace 14 – Songs of War

“Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies in the final sense, a theft from those who are hungry and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed.”

Dwight D. Eisenhower, U.S. President & General

With various wars, and the ever-increasing spread between the affluent and those struggling, we have not heeded President Eisenhower’s warning message well.

Violence and war are immature fear-based responses. A mature response is based in faith, with positive actions to inspire, aiding the transformation of those who threaten or act harmfully towards others. Violent acts cannot be truly overcome by violent responses that only defer future violence. In World War I, civilian casualties were 5%. Since the Korean War, *civilian casualties have been 60-80% and higher, and mostly children, women and the elderly in military conflicts.*

In traditional Native American ways, most tribes had a war chief, but many also had a peace chief who counseled on what overall harm a conflict would cause, and often prevailed. Decisions considered the next seven generations.

Women dance the Song of Life, and the corn rises from the earth.

Women dance the Song of Life, and her womb fills, giving birth.

Women sing the Song of Life, and the sun comes with the light.

Women sing the Song of Life, and the moon rises in the night.

Women cry the Song of Life, for those who go to war.

Women cry the Song of Life, for those who are no more.

alycia (longriver) davis

We do not need warfare. We do not need fear. We need a strong Department of Peace (State) as empowered to promote peace as the Dept. of Defense promotes military options. Instead of selling arms, supply education- medicine- ideas- and other quality of life support to impoverished areas that are the breeding grounds for militants and dictators. We need to respect the gift of life for all.

How many statues do we have of Generals versus Peacemakers?

How many conquerors can you name versus peacemakers?

It would be good to honor peace, not war.





Seeds of Peace 15 – Colors

Being of ‘elder’ age, I remember when color TV first started. There were only a few programs in color at first. One was the Western series *Bonanza*. Every Sunday night, after the black & white *Ed Sullivan Show*, it was amazing to see the TV spring to life ‘in living color.’ Men and boys watched the adventures of Ben Cartwright and his sons, while women and girls watched Adam (the strong, serious son) and Little Joe (the cute one). My family would gather, eat popcorn like in a theater, or share a platter of baked frozen French fries. Color TV was visual, exciting and stimulating compared to the black & white, dull gray-hued programs.

If we all lived in a white house, with white walls, white furniture, white décor, white floors, wore white clothing, drove a white car to work in white buildings...dull, dull, dull. Boring. Drab. Yuck. We would be drones incapable of creative thought.

We seek and embrace the diversity of color in our homes, clothes, cars and in all our ‘things.’ Color brings us the peaceful blue sky and waters, the beauty and passion of a red sunset, the green of growth, the yellow warmth of sun, the black mystery of night, the white reflection of winter, the palette array of birds.

We seek and embrace the color gifts of ‘things’ but reject the color gifts of people, remaining apart, separate, fearful of each other. We bask in the beauty of the sky rainbow but reject the beauty of the rainbow of people.

We’ve learned to co-exist at workplaces & sports, but not often for lunch or beyond into our private lives. There we ‘stick to our own’ for the most part.

Each color of people, each culture is rich with gifts to share other colors and cultures do not have. It is a gift to share, experience and be blessed by our diverse gifts of color and culture. It is not to be blind of our color or cultural differences but to rejoice in the sharing of our gifts. It is a unity of who we all are collectively, with appreciation and respect for who we are individually and culturally, a *bonanza* of color, a richness of colorful lives.





Seeds of Peace 16 – Back of the Cupboard

When is the last time we looked in the back of the cupboard?
Those things that are shoved to the back, out of sight, out of mind.

Our society puts many people in the back of the cupboard...elders, people of color, people of physical-mental-emotional challenges, people of difference, children suffering in far-away cupboards of the world.

All people have gifts and usefulness to share with the world. Elders carry the gifts and knowledge of the past. Elders can be historians, storytellers, advisors, not just stocking cans on a grocery store shelf. Children carry the promise of the tomorrows. A child shoved away may hold the gift to great discoveries if given the opportunities to use their gift. Diverse people have insight, experience and new ways of looking at things that maybe others never considered. Like the McCormick'sTM in the cupboard, diversity can add a little 'spice' to held views.

I make a habit of looking at items tucked away in cupboards, drawers or closets, not in recent use and ask, "How could this be utilized? Or, "Who could this be matched-up with for use?" Or, "How can I reshape this to bring it to life?" My mother used to get really surprised and laugh with the creative new ways resulting, giving new life to the item, helping it be functional, contributing, having value.

No one wants to be forgotten, left out, feeling of no use or value, sitting in the 'back of the cupboard' collecting dust. It is long overdue to open up society's cupboards wide, welcoming the many gifts and treasures sitting there, waiting to be utilized to share gifts of valid, valuable contribution.

It is good to look in the cupboards around us to see what they hold and look at forgotten items with new eyes and consideration. There are treasures there if we look.





Seeds of Peace 17 - Change

Why is it so hard to change? Why can't we end violence, take care of earth responsibly, have inclusiveness-equality-and fairness of life for all? We know these things are right and should be. Why aren't they? What do we have to do?

Nothing changes without complete dissatisfaction. Nothing. It is how we are built. Before we will lose weight, eat healthy, exercise, change jobs, change where we live, change a relationship, we must become fully dissatisfied with the existing situation. Until that point is reached, the change will not occur. We are more content staying 'with what we know' than stepping into the unknown and stepping into the unknown is what change requires. Therefore, it takes a lot for us to change anything.

"Growth demands a temporary release of security."Gail Sheedy

For group change (family, community, State, Nation) we must collectively be fully dissatisfied by enough of us to evoke change. Our collective state is how we add up individually as peaceful v. violent, giving v. greedy, inclusive v. discriminatory, caring v. indifferent, willing v. resistant, access v. non-access (education, jobs), and so forth. As individuals change, the collective world changes.

There are too many in power that like the status quo. The divisions created benefit those in power maintaining the status quo. It is good for their ambitions to have prevailing fears with this group against that group, and too many who buy into such fears and don't look beyond the 'sound bytes' of politicians and media.

We can also begin with ourselves. Be open to and seek desired changes. Do not fear change. Be peaceful. Be forgiving of all. Shun angers. Be giving. Be inclusive. Listen to others. And, most importantly, elect those who identify with and reflect these values. A wonderful world awaits. We just have to step up to make it so.





Seeds of Peace 18 – Fear

There is so much fear in the world. We fear death, violence, walking along the street, the loss of jobs, our neighbors, immigrants, what happens on Wall Street, whether there will be Social Security, and so much more. Government creates fear among us by what it does or doesn't do. Politicians create fear to divide us. Media stories create fear. Fear creates stress, tension, separation, self-centered living or isolated living.

Have no fear. Cautious awareness is appropriate but abject fear will cripple our lives. Have faith. Each of us is here to learn something, to teach something, to share the gifts we each hold to contribute for the good of the whole. It is our free will, free choice, to accept the path to our wholeness, of giving, of seeing and connecting to the inner light of all others upon earth, or deny them, turn away and fear others because they may look or sound different that we do.

We can love and help the children forced into slave-labor, or sex-slavery. We can love and help those who are excluded from having the basic needs of food, shelter, education and health care. We can love and help the innocent victims of regional power conflicts. We can love and help those who have gone astray by drugs and alcohol. We can love and help all whose voices are not heard by deaf societal institutions. We can welcome those shutout for being who they are.

It is seeing the light within each person...wealthy-poor, short-tall, straight-gay, skinny-large, healthy-ill, white-black-brown-yellow-red...everyone has a light within seeking connection to others. Dismiss the fears we hold about each other. Embrace the faith to connect to each other and help each other transform fear-based living to light-based living. We can let ourselves be governed by our short-term clay-being or we can embrace the spirit within our clay shells.

Fear not yesterday. It is gone. No harm can come from it. Fear not tomorrow. It has not yet arrived. We are safe and at peace at this moment, and that is all to be concerned about. Refuse a life of fear. Choose a life of faith.





Seeds of Peace 19 – Gone

Where has it gone? The following is an actual account from an Omaha tribal elder, 1882, as recorded in “Native American Testimony” (Ed. P. Nabokov, Penguin Pub.) The elder is remembering the landscape he and his people had once known along the western banks of the Missouri River in Nebraska.

“When I was a youth, the country was very beautiful. Along the rivers were belts of timberland, where grew cottonwood, maple, elm, ash, hickory and walnut trees and many other kinds. Also, there many kinds of vines and shrubs. And under these grew many good herbs for medicine and flowering plants. In both the woodland and the prairie, I could see the trails of many kinds of animals and could hear the cheerful songs of many kinds of birds. When I walked, I could see many forms of life, beautiful living creatures which Wakanda (Great Spirit) had placed here, and these were by their kind walking, flying, leaping, running, playing about. But now the face of all the land is changed and sad. The living creatures are gone. I see the land desolate and I suffer an unspeakable sadness. Sometimes I wake in the night and I feel as though I should suffocate from this awful feeling of loneliness”.....

The above testimony relates how this elder lived when the woodlands thrived with life and saw it turn into ripped-out trees, ripped-off topsoil, and its effects on all life around it, by the ‘coming of progress’ (cities, roads, poor use of land).

We have much talk, hype about the environment. Corporations like to have TV ads reflecting their concern, but the actions of business and government say otherwise. Peace includes environmental non-violence, respect and caring for the earth. We must stop the violence against the earth and seek better, gentler methods for what we need. The gifts of earth are limited. Through our careless use they will run out. We must ‘hear the Cry of the Earth’.





Seeds of Peace 20 – Circles : Power Poles

Circles are a place of equality, having no head nor tail. Each voice is heard. Traditional Native life existed through circle dynamics, respecting and honoring the gifts of men and women, in balance. Native circles were disrupted with Euro invasion, which followed male power-pole dynamics, where all are judged and treated by where they stand on the power-pole (top to bottom rankings). People seeking to get to the top have to step-over or on others to get there.

Much damage has been done to the earth and people by the imbalanced power societies we have allowed. Power and domination serve a few and are harmful to all others, women and men. The general population of men is not served by the Power Pole governing of the few men, by the few men, for the few men. The Power-Pole serves only those at the top, filtering-down leftovers to the rest of humanity. A circle embodies all, in thought, voice, concern and sharing.

It is not the fault of men, or even men ‘at the top’ holding power. It is just the result of imbalance, which we have all allowed. It came about through fear, of those holding the sword over any who might challenge. Nothing can survive imbalanced. It is not possible. It reaches a point of limitation that must be corrected to a balanced state. These imbalances of the earth and its people have reached such limitations. Balance must be restored, with partnerships of men and women.

Recent U.S. elections have shown an increase of women attaining political seats. As this further develops, it will create a major shift in government policymaking. Governing for health care, childcare, the environment, elder care, education, equality fairness and opportunity will take a much greater precedence over the narrow focus of present governing that benefits the few while leaving the many further and further behind.

The sun, the moon, the planets, the seasons, the tides, day to night back to day, all operate in a circle, a balanced natural cycle, that we need as a society.

All hear all, all see all, and all have a voice in a circle.





Seeds of Peace 21 – Fairness

When there have been activist gatherings, such as the Women’s March (Jan 2017), or other people marches, there are often mixed signs for equal pay, civil rights, lgbtq rights, women’s health choice, etc.. The media always says something like, “There are a lot of people but there doesn’t seem to be a cohesive message.”

Well, there is, and that unifying message is *fairness*. Fairness for gender equality, fairness for racial equality, fairness for pay scales, fairness for opportunity, fairness for voting, fairness for life inclusion, fairness for political access, fairness for education, fairness for health care, fairness for safety, etc.. *Fairness is the encompassing umbrella.*

It is not fair when a man and woman are doing the same job, with same qualifications and are paid differently. It is not fair when one child goes to a decent school and another goes to a broken one needing repairs- has limited technology-limited resources just because of the zip code where they live. It is not fair when folks trying to vote are made to jump through hoops to deter their votes and silence their voices. It is not fair when politicians listen to the voices with the biggest wallets. It is not fair when someone cannot marry the person they love, or adopt a child needing a home, because they are different than man/woman couples.

Fairness does not require anything special. It only requires having a level playing field of opportunity and access for every person and child, no matter their skin color, gender, culture, creed, language, sexual/gender identity, or any other separations *man* creates to separate us and keep us unequal.

Advocate for fairness. Stand-up for fairness. Connect fairness to our actions.

“Equality is treating everyone the same. But equity is taking differences into account, so everyone has a chance to succeed.”

— Jodi Picoult, *Small Great Things*





Seeds of Peace 22 - Cooperation

Something as basic as gardening may seem like a solitary effort, but it is not so.

Think about the gardening process. Cooperation and involvement comes from the soil, rain, sun, temperature, winds, worms, birds and other creatures. All must cooperate for the garden to grow. Any break-down in this connective cooperation process and the garden will not produce.

At times we feel, think or say, “**I** did this, or **I** did that,” or “**I** manage or make this or that.” Whatever one accomplishes is done with the cooperation, connection and support of others, usually many others, always.

There is always the need for leadership, but leading should not be a ‘power’ thing. Good leadership is more of a guidance than a command/obey dynamic. Leadership is by example, by sharing in the tasks involved, by encouraging others and recognizing others. This applies to government, business and all aspects of life.

Everything we do is in fact tied to connective energies and requires cooperation beyond ourselves. When we forget this and take the supporting efforts of others for granted, we open the door to disharmony, poor results and eventual failure.

We always need to recognize and appreciate the supporting cooperation for all we do. It reminds us we are not alone, not solitary, and maintains a healthy individual humility.

Embrace our connective cooperation with thanks. I humbly appreciate the supportive cooperation received with everything i have ever done with much thankfulness.

(Note: I purposely try remembering to write i in lower-case in mid-sentence. If i write you, the y is not capitalized and i am no more important than you so why should writing reflect that i am?)





Seeds of Peace 23 – Dodge City

The Old American West. Loose and wild. Streets of dirt and mud. Cowpokes, horse wranglers, gamblers, adventurers, buffalo hunters, all drifting into towns, looking for excitement after being on the trails and prairies. Liquor, card games, passions of the flesh, lots of noise, lots of tensions...but wait, the gun holsters are empty. There is a town ordinance, “No Guns in Town Limits”.

It was reasoned men would drink, party, argue, have physical fights and then could bring harm or death by guns in those moments of high emotion, passions and affected by alcohol consumption. Towns were where banks and other businesses stood as tempting targets to rob. To avoid harm and death, the towns had a notion, ‘Hey, no guns in town.’ Guns were turned into the marshal’s office when arriving, picked-up on departure. Guns were not restricted in the rural areas where they may be needed for protection or provision (hunting), and where community killings did not exist. Today the NRA is pushing to bring guns into every public space. It is nonsense to say the way to deter shootings is for more people to have guns. We are already the most gun-toting nation on the face of the earth many times over. No nation comes anywhere close to the number of guns in the U.S.. Even some individual States have far more private guns than most countries do.

If ‘urban’ gun bans were acceptable by the towns of the open Wild West, one might think it acceptable in a ‘civilized society’ based on the same wisdom of a lot of people in a confined populated area are going to have confrontations, and it is better they not have guns to reach for in moments of anger, reckless use, or to threaten anyone with. We create bans on different things in city areas. If the Wild West reasonably banned guns within city areas, why can’t we? Is there any legitimate need for assault weapons or large ammo magazine weapons?

Guns are made with one purpose...to kill or harm...people, animals, birds. To attain a non-violent state, we must rid our environment of violent weapons. Peace awaits us, but we must take the steps to make it so. Guns are not peaceful on any level.





Seeds of Peace 24 – Life

I mourn the lives lost in warfare, brought for reasons of political ideology, religious ideology and too often for personal power and/or profits.

I mourn the lives lost by guns in our streets, schools, workplaces and homes.

I mourn the lives lost through poverty, hunger, homelessness, preventable disease, preventable pregnancies, political indifference, social & institutional exclusion.

I mourn the lives lost through drugs and alcohol, by broken homes, violent homes, despair, hopelessness and thrill-seeking.

I mourn the lives lost through environmental contaminations of the sources of life...air, water, earth health through irresponsible government, military and corporate actions and greed.

I mourn the lives lost for being different of color, gender, national origin, religion, who someone loves, or someone's gender identity.

I mourn the lives of birds, animals, trees and other forms of creation for sport trophies, profit or through cruel careless deeds and indifference.

I mourn the lives lost through desperate loneliness.

All and more are daily occurrences, taking sacred life, which we all share a common responsibility for. A responsibility to nurture, protect, respect and promote life, not destroy. We are growing indifferent to senseless mass shootings. Some seek not to know, not to be aware, for if we know, then we must do something. *We must maintain our humanity by being outraged by outrageous acts* and work together to end such acts. We are losing our humanity by becoming silent, giving-up or giving-in to outrageous acts. Let us stand-up for life in all its aspects. One cannot be pro-life then be for gun rights, death penalties, and other forms of life-taking, or against helping poor single-mothers, economically disadvantaged schools and neighborhoods.





Seeds of Peace 25 - Race

I am white. I am black. I am Swedish. I am Irish. I am...whatever. The reality is we are all a mix of a lot of cultures and races. Since the first human that can be found traces to Africa we are probably all part African if we go back through enough time. People moved around everywhere, and everywhere people moved more mixes of people and cultures developed.

After the Greek Empire, the Roman Empire lasted 500 years, spread through Europe and the Mideast, with soldiers, traders, craftsmen. How many mixed children did Greek and Roman occupiers create throughout the world? How many children did those children then produce, then the next generation and the next?

How about the Viking invasions of England, Scotland, Ireland, the exploration of Newfoundland and other areas of Canada? How many Irish in Ireland are mostly Scandinavian genetically? Even 'English' Royal lines are mixed through marriages for alliances with France, Germany and other 'countries'. Spain was occupied by Moors for a time and another part of Spain by Celts still there today.

Germany is a mix of Scandinavia and others who occupied those lands. Meso and South America is a mix of Spanish, Portuguese and Asian-Native cultures.

Every 'continent' and every 'nation' comes from a mix of invaders, explorers, traders and others. Even the 'continents' began as one land mass before splitting apart, as we began as one people. All the labels and splitting-off of people are self-imposed and self-defined. Our 'colors' are only a result of how long ancestors lived in a hot environment. People eventually became lighter in skin, hair and eyes in cool climates. Those in hot climates remained dark, but all are the same bread from the same loaf and same seeds, only left in the toaster (sun) longer. Think about it. We are all truly one people sharing one home of earth.



As flowers can never flourish in a field of weeds, neither can peace flourish in a field of fear.....a.l.davis



Seeds of Peace 26 – Racial Healing

If a wound remains open it can never heal, becoming infected and causing greater problems. It is the same for individual and societal dynamics. We cannot undergo the racial healing so desperately needed if wounds remain open and there are still deep wounds among us. We may admit or deny them, but they are there in the conscious and subconscious. We may not know the full details of how the wound was made, but know a wrong was done, so the wound remains.

We need to never forget the holocaust of 6 million Jewish victims of the Nazis, but there was also America's holocaust of millions of Native people, including the slaughter and starvation of women, children to 'clear out Indians'. America has never made any real apology. Today's 'Reservations' have much poverty, lack of access, while lands are robbed of minerals, grazing, oil & gas, lumber, more. It is the same for African Americans brought in chains, with many still living 'in the chains' of poverty, lack of access, equal education & opportunity. Japanese American citizens were imprisoned during World War II, but America did not imprison German or Italian Americans. These are all deep wounds in our national spirit that remain open causing infection and generational mistrust-anger-fears-guilt-separation. Millions are still being shut out of equal treatment.

Both the guilt of the oppressor and the forgiveness by the oppressed must be acknowledged and released. If still oppressed it has to stop. Guilt harbors fears and resentment and can bring more oppression to the oppressed. We have much to do. In 1995 I was told not to pray at a sacred Native site by Fed Rangers. Again in 97, at a Native site in Ohio going for Equinox prayers, my license, registration were written by Feds. It was against the law for Natives to have ceremonies until 1978 and still given difficulty to do so. Hearts must be open to all. To welcome all, and for all to be able to move forward.





Seeds of Peace 27 – Peaceful Ways

What are the ways of peaceful living?

- ❖ Openly sharing a smile with people encountered daily.
- ❖ Quiet connection time at a shore, park, forest, yard, sitting quietly, feeling.
- ❖ Listening to a neighbor or coworker needing to talk, even a stranger.
- ❖ Special time with life partner, children, parents, friends.
- ❖ Visiting someone ill or lonely.
- ❖ Resolving a conflict within self, with another or between others.
- ❖ Laughing, playing with family. Just being silly. Being free.
- ❖ Releasing an old anger or letting go of a recent one.
- ❖ Painting or drawing a picture. Listening or dancing to music. Opening.
- ❖ Making crafts with children, friends or with elders.
- ❖ Volunteering at hospital, elder home, food pantry, women's center.
- ❖ Spontaneous outings to free events: picnic, walk, outdoor concert.
- ❖ Baking with children or friends.
- ❖ Talking to someone alone at a lunch counter, park bench, waiting room.
- ❖ Taking part in a peace walk, charity walk/run.
- ❖ Giving goods no longer needed to a place that uses for good cause.
- ❖ Go to a cross-cultural event, a festival, pow-wow, cultural supper.
- ❖ Watch a sunrise or sunset in a special spot.
- ❖ Organize or take part in a community improvement event.
- ❖ Color with or read stories to children. Better—act out stories.
- ❖ Take a walk in the sunshine. Use curbs as a balance beam. Be young.
- ❖ Grow flowers from seed, feel the earth, involve children if possible.
- ❖ Give a book or gift to a friend for no reason.
- ❖ Let people go ahead of you in lines or in traffic.
- ❖ Pick-up and put back fallen merchandise in retail stores.
- ❖ Bring an elder to the store or other errands. Help with snow removal.



There are hundreds of ways to live and give peace daily. Open our hearts.



Seeds of Peace 28 – Seeing the Light

A child asked , “Grandmother, there is so much hurt and violence everywhere. You said things will get better. I do not see it.”

Grandmother replied, “Young One, there is great change taking place, but it can be hard to see. I’ll tell you a story.There was a woman in the village who beaded and stitched many things of great beauty. People brought her gifts to make things for them. There were so many people wanting her work it became hard to keep up. She worked even harder becoming very tired. One night after beading many hours, she tripped on a corner of a woven floor mat, falling, hitting her head. She could see only darkness. Her sight was gone.”

“She took a gift to the medicine healer. He prayed, said, ‘Rest. Be patient and your sight will return.’ She lived in darkness, fearful and withdrew from the circle of people. She could not bead nor stitch. She felt hopeless and useless. She was afraid to walk outside her lodge. She just ate and slept. Soon these held no pleasure.”

“One day she saw bright light but still could not see anything. The medicine healer said, ‘Have patience. It will be soon. *After living in darkness, your eyes must get used to the light before you see clearly.*’ After more time, she did see clearly, creating more beautiful beading than she ever had, giving thanks for her sight.”

We have been in the dark a long time. More are seeking the light. More see the light but cannot see clearly yet. It feels confusing, even fearful. Many have withdrawn. We must have patience. Change is happening around the world in many ways. We shall see the light. Life and living will become most beautiful, peaceful and abundant for all. The darkest of night must pass before the light of day starts to come through. The light will come and shine.





Seeds of Peace 29 – Simple Living

The path to life satisfaction and fulfillment may seem elusive but it is not. It is a transformation from self-centered living to a more spirit-centered living, a focus of our life purpose supported by the material needs to do so.

Need vs Greed...we each have a different need level based on our individual circumstances, family situations. It is recognizing what our own 'need' level is. Everything beyond it is clutter, not needed. It becomes the greed of having more than others. When our desires and needs are in-balance, we begin to experience the inner worth of life, a spiritual sharing with all humanity. *Material goods will never satisfy in the long-term.* It is our connections to each other that satisfy, bring joy and lasting memories we treasure. New 'stuff' loses its shine quickly.

The more material goods sought the more it takes from the environment and clogs the environment (with throw-aways). Consider house size. The average house size in 1950 was 983 sq. ft., 1970 – 1500sf, 2004 – 2350sf, 2016 – 2500sf. From 1950 to 2016 the average house size has more than doubled, while family sizes are same or less. Environmentally, it takes more trees, more plastics, more glass, more everything to build larger houses and with larger houses having same or fewer people, there is more room to separate, losing connection to each other.

It is not to live stripped down to nothing. It is finding a comfortable level of what we really need, not over-abundance adding nothing in the long-term of true happiness and satisfaction. Our treasures are the people around us, not the shiny baubles and bling. There is a need level each can find and through it find the path to an everlasting satisfaction, filling life with our spiritual center, with the love of those in our circles. It is a transformation from life seeking material goods to life in faith & oneness with all. Not about a religious dogma but the spirituality of living in peace, harmony, appreciating each other and sharing the resources of our family home (earth) in a good way with all.





Seeds of Peace 30 – ML King

During the cross-country walk, we held a gathering in Memphis, at the Civil Rights Museum. It had been the Lorraine Motel where Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated from across the street. It was a powerful night. For the first time in the city, we gathered several hundred people from all different cultures, all sharing their cultural foods, music, poetry, dance. All the races and cultures had never come together like this before in Memphis. With my hand on his memorial plaque, i could almost feel his heart beating and see him smile in the sky.

He is a reminder of what can happen in time. Although he began slowly being involved in civil rights in 1955, the primary activities he is known for occurred between 1963-1968. In just those five years, he led a massive change in this country and touched people around the world. In five years! And did so peacefully.

He brought change with active, non-violent, peaceful ways against solidly entrenched forces of segregation and domination. He and his followers stood in their truth, courage and prayers through beatings, hosings, dog attacks, jailings, bombings, church fires, murders and all else the oppressors could do. Gandhi did the same in India, using non-violent methods against an entrenched British occupation who used military violence. Mandela did the same for South Africa.

While such dangerous conditions do not exist for most situations, it is a reminder that change does need an activism. Peace is not a passive energy. It requires an active participation. It requires people to stand up and say, ‘No, this is not right.’

While there are many mixed-race, mixed-cultural marriages, friendships these days, there are still hate groups around looking to create separation and harm. As Dr. King showed, much can be done in a short period of time if we are willing to stand-up for peace, inclusion and fairness for all. Hate must not be allowed to stand. We must stand against it, together.





Seeds of Peace 31 – We Must Overcome

We must overcome....

Hands that strike out, with hands that reach out.

Conflict & Competition, with Cooperation & Connection.

Ways that take life, with ways that give life.

Efforts that shutout, with warmth that welcomes in.

Poles of Power, with Circles of Community.

Fearing others, with knowing, talking with, accepting others.

Destroying resources, by utilizing renewable resources.

Politics for the few, with governing for the many.

The loss through wars, with the gains through peace.

The clutches of greed, with the simplicity of need.

The darkness of the few, with the light of the many.

We can overcome. We must overcome. “We shall overcome.”





Seeds of Peace 32 – 10 Years Old

A 10-year old boy lives in a Connecticut suburb in a split-level house. Mom and Dad have professional jobs. Mom also goes to the gym daily and Dad runs or bikes. One or the other rush home with take-out food. Dad eats in front of the TV. Mom's in the bath, soaking, meditating with candles. The boy asks for love. Dad's asleep and Mom doesn't hear.

A 10-year old girl lives in a London flat in a low-income neighborhood. With no work opportunities, her father ran off somewhere else. Her mother lives frightened, tired, sad. The girl asks for love, but Dad is gone, and Mom is tired.

A 10-year old boy lives on a farm in Africa. His father was killed by marauding rebels. His mother lives in constant fear and poverty. They travel to a refugee center far away. There was a land mine. The boy asks for love and loses a leg.

A 10-year old girl lives in Asia. Her parents are poor. They sell her to a factory to make sneakers for American buyers. She works sun-up to sunset for little, with no breaks allowed. The American company sell the sneakers for \$ 150. She asks for love, receives hunger, abuse, a factory prison existence.

A 10-year old boy lives on the streets in Argentina. His parents couldn't afford to keep him. He begs, scavenges garbage, steals, sells what he must including himself. He's part of the streets with other boys and girls. City officials and police do not want them bothering tourists, upsetting business owners. Some die in the night, some by police. The boy asks for love, receives death.

These are a token of the world's forgotten children. They exist by the millions. Many never even know a home, a day of peace, or having adequate food or clean water. As the saying goes, 'It takes a village, to raise a child.' They are all our children. Let us give all a global village of life, love, nurturing, fairness.

Open our hearts to protect and provide for all children of the earth.





Seeds of Peace 33 – Songs

There is a special song within each of us. Our path is to listen for it, hear it when it comes, choose to follow its tune and sing it in our daily lives.

For some the song is to bring birth, nurturing the next generation of songs. For others, it is to be active in helping others in need. For some it is to share kindness, a smile or a listening heart with neighbors and others encountered daily. Each of our songs is different but each is a song of beauty and value if we hear and choose to embrace it.

Some songs are long, while others may be brief. Someone's song may be brief to open ears and hearts so other songs can be heard and sung. As example, after a mass school shooting, others may become advocates and activists for tighter gun controls. Someone's song may be to affect, enhance and lift the potential of others, like a teacher, or a song to heal the body, the mind, the spirit.

Most songs come with challenge and always the choice to sing it or not. It is not easy. Some songs may be more difficult than others. It is our choice to hear and sing our song in spite of challenge, discomfort or obstacles. Whatever the degree of difficulty our song has, we are also provided whatever gifts we need to sing it well.

Do we hear our song? Have we listened for it? Are we ready to hear it, follow it, even when it may mean letting go of what may seem comfortable, but is really stagnation, or the fear to follow the unknown?

The singing of our song is the harmony of our earthwalk, the harmony of our spiritual (internal) and our physical (external).

Listen well. Hear your song in the whispers of your heart, within your dreams.





Seeds of Peace 34 – Human Spirit

We have such inner capacity, such inner strength available to us, but so many do not realize it. We see and hear the constant fearful noise and voice of the negatives. We feel the lack of connection with governmental policies that do not hear our voice, our needs. We are pulled into a competitive cycle of consumption, acquisition and conflict. But, these are our challenges.

Solutions exist. It is the will to seek, support and create the energy for real solutions that is lacking. To every problem there are solutions. To every conflict there are commonalities to work toward mutual, peaceful resolutions, but we cannot know the solutions unless we seek them, allow them and use our voice to create them. We rely on political warriors to find our solutions, but a warrior only knows competition, conquest, winning, domination, control of a thing or others.

The human spirit has so much potential, so much unrealized potential. We have not begun to touch our depth as yet. We accept misconceptions of our limitations, but we are far from limited. I have known great challenge to survive since birth, denied access to the everyday life all take for granted, but have survived without anger, staying positive, always trying, always going forward, always helping of others. I know from daily experience our strength to survive and rise above whatever challenges come our way. Without hope and faith, i could never have survived. I've had a difficult path but also given great gifts as well.

We all have great inner strength if we reach for it, if we don't give up, if we don't follow or allow others to convince us of limitations they set on us.

Be gently strong. Have faith in your amazing potential.



From John Lennon's *Imagine...* 'You may say that I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one. Hope someday you will join us, and the world will live as one.'



Seeds of Peace 35 – Prayer of Spirit

I pray-----

>for all the children, that they may grow with peace, love and harmony, never knowing violence of any kind (physical, emotional, verbal, societal, economical).

>for all mothers, that they may be guided with unconditional love, nurturing, strength and wisdom, as gifts for their children, and know their strength.

>for all fathers, that they may be strong, kind, nurturing, creating a secure loving bond with partner, for children, for family, and feel their emotions.

>for all the earth, forests, fields, mountains, plains and deserts, that they may be healthy and vital for all who live, grow and rely upon their gifts with respect.

>for all the waterways, that they may flow clean, fresh, healthy and vital, for all who live within, upon, or need their gifts of water and air.

>for all the colors of people, to let go of past hurts, and all find our healing, our unity, our gifts from the diverse rainbow of people, our diverse unity.

>for hearts to be open...to hear, feel, know and follow the ways of true peace.

>for women to come together in circles, finding connective, supportive strength to bring the forgotten energies of the feminine into balanced seats of societal decisions (government, media, religion, medicine, economics).

>for the world to join in harmonic composition of one heart, one spirit of caring, sharing, cooperation and connection, *for we are all truly one waiting to be one.*

>for our hearts to be open so we can attain the amazing potential that lies within all, for the good of all, for all our relations (*mitakuye oyasin*).





Seeds of Peace 36 – Universal Thought

Universal thought is a powerful energy, a source we've forgotten, or allowed ourselves to be led away from. We used to share world thought and it would be good to open those channels again. It is the opening of hearts and minds.

Along our early beginnings, although spread around the globe, we all discovered the same drum of wood and skin to beat the heart of Mother Earth. We played the same flute of wood to the winds and shook the same rattles of falling rain. The fitted stone buildings of ancient Israel-Egyptian deserts are similar to ancient Southwest pueblos and kivas. The pyramids and their reasons of Egypt and Meso-America are similar. Many ancient global pottery shapes and styles are the same in different global areas, as was celestial knowledge, and so much more.

There were no newspapers, magazines, telephones, computers or world-wide trading to spread ideas from one part of the globe to the other side of the globe, long before explorers started connecting global lands. So how did we all come up with the same designs, same use, same knowing, in so many areas across the earth? Somehow we were tapping into our shared universal thoughts.

We all once honored and respected Mother Earth. We all gave thanks for the gifts of the sun; the rain for crops; the blessings of the hunt for food, clothing, tools; of plants and trees for food and medicines. *We've forgotten our universal thankfulness.* Forgotten the drum we once shared. Forgotten the way of universal thought. We must recapture our gifts of universal thoughts that touch each other.

Within us we still have gifts and skills that have been forgotten and not utilized. They exist in children until we, as learned adults, dismiss and discourage their use. When we are 'plugged-in' to the universe, it is an incredible feeling.





Seeds of Peace 37 – Web of Life

There is a Native Lakota expression of '*mitakuye oyasin.*' It expresses, 'for all my relations,' or 'all is related' depending on usage. It is said aloud, or within, before ceremonies, such as humbly entering a sweat lodge (*inipi*). I use it to start any writing or action, to remind i am one tiny strand but connected to an immense web.

It reminds we are all related: people, creatures, and all that is earth, sky and water. Each is connected to and affects the whole. Each and all is part of the *web of life*. What we each do or don't do affects all.

Change in the water quality 'there,' affects water quality 'here.'

Plastics or harmful materials dumped 'there,' find shorelines 'here.'

Smog or fire smoke from 'there,' travels with winds to 'here.'

Land developed 'there,' moves creatures to 'here.'

War, violence and poverty 'there,' brings refuges 'here.'

An earthquake 'there,' creates tremors 'here.'

No place, person or creature is removed from what happens elsewhere.

Another traditional tribal consideration is: do not do anything without thinking how it will affect the next seven generations. Too often people, businesses and governments think only of today's gain or loss, with no regard of the generational tomorrows of children's grandchildren.

Understand we are all one. All are part of the Web of Life.

And the web extends from the past into the future.

All is connected.



These are simple yet complex teachings that should be regarded in all our decisions, individually and collectively.



Seeds of Peace 38 – Two Dogs

There were two dogs. One was chained outside, even in bad weather, rarely receiving any warmth, affections or attentions and given poor food, not enough water. Sometimes the dog was treated meanly.

The dog next door lived inside the home with people. The people played with the dog and went together for walks in the park. This dog received good food, attention, always had clean water and was loved by the home's people.

Would not the first dog act very defensively if anybody came near? Would this dog grow mean, ready to snarl, attack and bite? What would happen if it came into contact with the 'privileged' dog next door?

What about the children in our society, living in poor conditions without decent shelter, warmth, decent clothing-shoes, good food, water, decent schools-education, devices most kids have, good neighborhoods, work opportunities? Might they grow up to be defensive, have angers, resentment? Might they be ready to attack those who do have? Are they to blame or are we as a society?

How many people do we neglect, nor share the means of quality life needs, or withhold the mutual respect and social inclusion we extend to those 'like us'? How many people do we 'justly punish' for their reaction to hopeless abandonment, exclusion and lacking access to a decent quality and basic fairness of life?

It isn't rocket science to understand our social results. It does take open, humane, sharing hearts to resolve them and evolve to our wholeness, and reject the fear and divisions those in power encourage to keep us all in line. It is about providing all communities with equal opportunities of education, economic access and the light of self-worth, hope and living vs. existing.

The cost of a submarine, warplane or missile could provide and transform entire communities. Open our hearts.





Seeds of Peace 39 – What Can I Do

It is not sure of the exact country of origin as the basics of this story is told ‘as their own’ in various countries and cultures in Europe, the Middle East and Far East going back many centuries. This is one of many versions.

A turtle was slowly walking along a path and came upon Sparrow lying on her back. Turtle asked, ‘Sparrow, why are you lying like this on the path?’ Sparrow said, ‘I heard the sky is about to fall upon us.’ Turtle replied, ‘Oh, and I suppose you think your puny little legs can hold up the sky?’ Sparrow answered, ‘One does what one can.’ (In some places this is the ‘Chicken Little’ story.)

When i received the vision to walk across the country, a friend told me to find a book about a woman known as ‘Peace Pilgrim’ who walked for 28 years (1953-1981) in the cause of peace. Her life and work have since been a deep inspiration for me. One of her spiritual sharings is... ‘Never think of any right effort as being fruitless. All right effort bears fruit, whether we see the results or not.’

We may never see the results of our ‘right efforts’. Our peaceful thoughts, prayers, sharings and actions are like seeds. They may take time to germinate and grow. Planting the seeds is an act of faith. A seed planted within a child may not sprout until years later when suddenly it germinates into consciousness. A seed planted with conflicting parties may take time for each to process what has been planted.

What we should do at this critical time of people and earth healing is not be dormant. Like Sparrow, it is not to think about the challenge, but to have faith and ‘do what one can’. At the start of the walk, if i were to have thoughts about walking over 3000 miles it would have been impossible to do, but i knew i could walk today’s miles. Tomorrow is tomorrow. We can get there together one step, one mile at a time. As long as we keep walking forward nothing is impossible.

Do what you can today. Do something tomorrow.





Seeds of Peace 40 – What to Do

There are many reminders in these writings that say what is wrong. They are for awareness, for not to forget the forgotten, not to dismiss or close our eyes. We can make a difference together.

We can ask for the healing of all people, healing for the earth, for non-violence, for hearts to open, for all to have food and shelter, whatever our heart calls for.

We can use our voice to express dissatisfaction through voting, letters, social media, boycotts of companies with destructive behaviors, petitions, vigils, community walks....there are many ways, but it should make a known public statement at some level.

We can be involved actively in environmental clean-ups, recycling efforts, give-aways, finding ways to reduce wasteful consumption, helping the elderly and others in need, helping neighbors having a rough time, giving time to a child.

We can be creative in our approach to situations, striving for win/win/win solutions. Note: There is usually a silent 3rd party, i.e. consumers, environment, poor countries, or others affected by every decision. A mining company and coal workers reaching agreement may be a win/win, but it is a loss for the environment and health care (including the miners), so it is not a win for all.

We can stand together wherever we can or must, to say to a situation, '*this is not acceptable*'...street violence, hate groups, drugs, earth damage or whatever a community needs. Sometimes one person must have the courage to stand in the truth and he/she will grow to be the majority in time.

It is removing blinders, going beyond 'this is the way it is' or 'this is the way it has always been', and create new avenues. Be creative. No idea is crazy. Let the imagination grow, without editing inspiration too much. No one can make another change. Change must come from within each person, in their own way. Listen and open our hearts. Peace actions must be visible.





Seeds of Peace 41 – Why It Is

Being in a time of critical choice may be difficult for some but we are blessed to be here at this time. We are part of a magnificent unfolding story. Each of us has a place, a role to fulfill, if we choose to accept it. There is a wondrous world to be, a major leap of human evolution, *if we choose to seek it.*

How can this be with so much violence, greed, racism, division and fear? *All these things have had to be.* They have been here a long time, but often hidden. When racism, exclusion, violence, abuse are hidden behind closed doors of homes and institutions, they become subtle and hard to see their existence and extent. If we cannot see them, we remain in ignorance and unaware. That may be more comfortable for mainstream population but is not just, nor moral. All of these things, along with awareness of earth destruction, *have had to take place*, be noticed, surface, disturb us, so that we can see them and make choices. We must become dissatisfied enough to choose, pursue and accept change.

A major turning point will be the election of more women into political seats of power. Women have greater experience and feelings for the care of children-education-health care-elder care-environment-budgeting, all the areas that are most important for people's daily lives. The trend has started but in its beginning.

For change to occur, enough people must be dissatisfied to seek and accept better ways. These energies are happening. The story is being written and is unfolding for people and the earth. Do not be discouraged or despair. Understand the blessing of being here at this time. Do feel the dissatisfaction and use it for the energy of change, the change of evolutionary life-giving, rejecting the ways of life-taking we have lived under politically and socially for far too long. We cannot heal what we cannot see. We know more now. Our eyes are not closed to evils hidden in silent darkness. The dark has been illuminated.

Now it is our choice to evolve or not.





Seeds of Peace 42 – People Power

Evil acts of violence and compassionate acts of peace are taking place. By our individual choices, one of these energies will eclipse the other, to establish a collective trend and lead to a collective state of being for all. Both choices have been on the rise and becoming very visible, calling upon each of us to choose. No one should sit on the sidelines, for we are all connected and affected by how we choose individually and collectively.

Institutions may not be leaders of positive trends at times. It is the people, the common people, the grassroots, the circle networks of people and community that must step-up when institutions are not fulfilling their intent. President Bush 41 talked about a ‘thousand points of light’, but we must have millions.

We cannot be complacent. During this time of writing (2019), hate groups and hate crimes are rising. Children, parents and students are killing each other as never before with the rise of gun access everywhere. We need to show and share our love, standing in the strength and truth of peace, nonviolence, humanity and respect, with compassion for all people, for all earth, as never before. Evil can only exist if we remain silent to it and allow it. We, as people, have the power to change anything that needs changing. We just need to be willing and do it.

Every thought, word or action of love produces a result. *It matters.* Whether it is a smile to a stranger, speaking to someone who looks lonely, picking up trash from a street corner or riverbank, or direct volunteer service to others, all is important. *It matters.* Reading or telling stories to children. *It matters.* People doing acts of love and compassion has a large transformative effect on the whole. Standing, holding a sign for people or earth care. *It matters.* You and I have the power to change things daily. *It matters.*





Seeds of Peace 43 – Tending Gardens

One April two couples decided to plant gardens. Each couple removed the grass, turned the earth and planted seeds. They each ‘made’ a garden.

Every day one couple checked their garden, watering, aerating, pulling weeds, and composting as needed. This couple put their hands into the earth, caring for and nurturing the seedlings to plants, giving what was needed for healthy growth.

The other couple rarely bothered with their garden. They stayed indoors watching television figuring it should ‘be okay’. The garden lacked water, nutrients, and all the basic elements of care. Soon the garden was filled with weeds stunting and choking the growth of the plants. Nothing edible was produced and there were no healthy seeds to begin new growth.

This is the way of life for us, and our children. We choose to do the work to nurture, care for and tend our ‘inner garden’ or not. We also choose to nurture with love and attention, fertilize with teachings of people/earth respect and give our seedlings (children) what they need to grow healthy physically, emotionally and spiritually, or we do not.

Most can ‘make’ a garden. How we ‘tend the garden’ is what determines whether or not there will be a healthy plants or not. No growth comes from an absent gardener. It does not make much sense to make a garden and then not bother to tend it so it can grow to produce healthy results. It is our choice to make a garden or not, but if we do, we should be prepared to nurture its growth.

Gardens may be our inner spirit, our children, the neighborhood, the nation or the world. We choose to pay attention to the gardens, to nurture and tend the gardens or not. If not, our gardens will be filled with weeds stunting and choking growth and not produce anything worthwhile.

May we all dig in and ‘tend our gardens’.





Seeds of Peace 44 – Three Crows Walking

I was given different names by several Native Elders in different tribes. *Longriver* was the first and feels best for me. When given, the Elder said the Long was for spiritual height (i am tall anyways), and river was for travel bringing messages. Another name given was '*Three Crows Walking*'. The Crow represents travel (and i have certainly travelled walking over 3000 miles) and is also a messenger for some tribes. The Three is for the messages....*peace, faith, hope*.

- ❖ *Peace* in its fullest. Peace within oneself, within family, community, region, nation and world. Peace as its own energy in all things, not just an absence of conflict or time between conflicts, but a constant energy of peaceful actions, peaceful words, peaceful thoughts....doing no harm in all things.
- ❖ *Faith* in spirit. Faith in the sacred, not worship of the secular. Living for spiritual well-being, not just accumulation beyond need harming resources and limiting access by others. If someone takes a lot, someone has a lot less. It is to have faith in provision, to share. A faith to hear and follow what is truly in our heart, a listening to our 'better selves'. A faith to respect all others and to respect the earth. All is related. All is part of Creation. Harm of one with wrong purpose harms all.
- ❖ *Hope* for tomorrow, through peace and faith. Hope for all children and the seven generations to follow. Hope brings energies to create a living world of sustaining life, nurturing life, giving life. Hope is our survival. Without hope living ceases, is drained away and replaced by mere existence. With hope there is an energizing vitality, a will to fulfill the hope.

Peace – Faith – Hope. Do no harm, by thought, word or deed.

These are the seeds of the messages as an 'old crow' i try to share wherever and whenever i can.





Seeds of Peace 45 – Planting Seeds

There is no illusion that one person can change the world, although we can and do each bring changes to the world, every hour of every day. We each choose what we contribute daily, be it peace-angers, harmony-disharmony, love-hate, inclusion-exclusion, giving-taking.....the balance of our choices is what the world is.

We are all messengers. Messages are only heard by others who have a belief in or are seeking such messages at some level. With help and guidance, messengers may help enhance, nurture, validate, support, encourage the shared feelings of others, so together our voices, our energies, our prayers, deeds, words and thoughts can be woven into the greater robe of humanity.

A messenger is a mere planter of seeds. Some will grow, some will not. In tribal ways and other 'old wisdoms' 5 seeds may be planted: 2 birds or animals will take; 2 the weather will take; and with care one may grow a healthy plant. Some may grow tall while others may grow slowly. Some may lay dormant then rise.

It is the difficult local work, of tending, watering, nurturing, weeding that will develop the growth, the harvest by the gardeners who live in the fields of communities. Sowing the seeds of messages is not difficult. It is the dedicated cultivation which is difficult to bring about healthy growth. Deepest respect and much appreciation is given to all the local community 'gardeners' who work so hard in the efforts of peace, children care and earth care. On the cross-country walk we made sure to tell the circle we spoke with of the circle up the road we just left also working hard, so they would know they were not alone in their efforts.

Thank-you to all striving in the gardens of peace.....





Seeds of Peace 46 – Transformation

A child said, “Grandmother, look at the beautiful butterfly. I wish I were a butterfly, so pretty and able to fly.”

Grandmother said, “Young One, you can be like butterfly, but it is not an easy path. Butterfly goes through several difficult changes to become beautiful and have the freedom to fly. Butterfly begins as a crawler, moving very slowly, observing all that is before it, and in constant danger by predators. In a way, as crawler it does die, weaving its own shroud to lie in stillness for a period. When awakened, Butterfly is new and reborn, no longer a crawler confined to the ground, no longer limited to see only what was right before the crawler’s eyes. Now Butterfly sees far and wide, bright with color and light to glide with breezes, no longer plodding heavily along. Like all shape-shifters Butterfly will bring new spirit and energy to all connections. As a crawler Butterfly took from the plants eating their leaves. Transformed, Butterfly gives to the plants and flowers, distributing pollen for new growth. Butterfly completes its life cycle. Butterfly’s path is not easy, Young One, but the world receives much beauty from those who follow it.”

Transformation and change is a difficult process. For humans, change usually only comes after reaching a state of great dissatisfaction. When we become dissatisfied enough with relationships, jobs, body weight, hairstyle, cars, anything, then we will seek change. The dissatisfaction many feel about politics, the environment, social issues, human rights, gun violence is creating the energies needed to seek change, to be shape-shifters to something new, to become the butterfly.

Glide with the breezes giving beauty to the world, giving life to new growth.





Seeds of Peace 47 – Spirituality

We all walk a road between our physical needs (material) and our inner needs (spiritual), but what does it mean? Can the two co-exist or be reconciled? They can and we make our choices daily.

Spirituality is a win/win/win compromise benefiting all parties versus win/lose or win/win/lose advantages. In business it might be concern for stockholders, employees, the environment, and social responsibility to harm none.

Spirituality of government is that of All people, by All people, for All people versus division, exclusion, special interests, power, control. It honors peace and peacemakers, not war. It doesn't make and sell weapons of war to other governments. It places human rights, quality of life, and earth-care for all people above interests serving the few at the cost to many.

The spirituality of medicine is healing for healing, not profit focus. To heal the root cause of illness, not just the branch symptoms. Healing is the balance of the physical-spiritual-emotional and requires a multi-disciplinarian approach for wholeness.

The spirituality of religion is to embrace All people as they are and help all in need unconditionally. It is not who has the most members or riches. It is not 'my book is right and yours is wrong'. It is not, 'My God is more powerful than your god.' Spirituality hasn't killed people, but many have been killed in the name of religion.

The spirituality of technology is the advancement of life quality, earth quality versus tools for warfare or further domination-destruction of earth and life.

The spirituality of materials is the provision of need, not greed, nor the seeking of accumulation for the pursuit of status above others having less than need fulfilled.

The spirituality of family is to give love, care and nurturing for partners, children, parents and others in our family circles. To accept each other. To not judge each other or hold destructive grudges. It is to be one with our global family.





Seeds of Peace 48 – Earth Church

Peace can be found inside a church. The outdoors can also provide sacred peaceful space. It is the energy of my spirituality. The sky is the roof, the earth is the floor, and the four directional horizons are the walls. With every step taken, earth's church moves with me, wherever that may be.

To absorb the energy and warmth of the sun. To feel the quiet mystery of the moon and stars. To hear and watch the ocean, seeing its white diamonds dancing across the waves. To walk forest paths, following the trails of the four-legged, hearing the songs of the winged, feeling the ancient presence in old trees and older rocks. To stand upon mountains and see far like eagle, beyond the eyes of ground life. To walk the silent desert sands, with no end to the expanse of earth and sky. To climb rock mesas and plateaus of the ancients, feeling and hearing their voices of counsel, their plea to help and protect Mother Earth and all our earth relations. To hear the whispers of the winds, the rustling of the waving grass. These things are deep within my heart. I was blessed to humbly travel, to see and feel all this.

The earth is sacred space, where we can connect to our spirituality. It need not be a mountaintop. Special space can be found in a park, along a roadside, or in the backyard. It is stopping to sit, to reflect, to breathe, to feel, to observe all that is around us. There is beauty and creation in the clouds, trees, plants, birds, squirrels, a kitten playing, a dewdrop, an ant at work. If we do not make time to connect to earth we leave a void in ourselves and our children if they are not encouraged to experience and feel the earth. It is hard to respect and protect 'something' if we feel no connection to it.

In earth's church i feel creation, and am energized by earth's gifts, feeling peaceful by the beauty and awe, and very blessed to know and feel these gifts, returning thankfulness and my spirit for all earth's blessings. Be one with the earth. Sit with earth. Find your sacred space. Help children find theirs. Peace grows there.





Seeds of Peace 49 – Values

Power and greed are destructive forces, but ironically given the highest values by our society. Power is the force to control others through physical domination, economic domination, verbal manipulation, dependency or fears. Greed is seeking far beyond need for status or ego symbols, to look down upon others.

Who do we honor with our mass notice, public interest, public monuments, or now ‘who do we follow on-line’? Is it the humble? The peacemakers? Those without material accumulation? We give our attention, curiosity, adulation to those of power, to those who rule, those who own, those who control, those who glitter.

By giving highest value to those of most power, most wealth, we diminish the value of those not seeking to control others, not seeking greed and thereby reduce the societal values of humility, caring, sharing, serving. We devalue satisfaction. What do the children learn about ‘values’ in such a society?

Do our leaders seek to serve or rule? To truly give, or to personally gain? The more those at the top take, the less there is for all others to share. There is only one pie the world has to share among all.

The impact of displaced values devalues the work of so many who serve the homeless, the hungry, the ill, the lonely, the abused, the excluded. Students are encouraged to seek ‘high-pay’ jobs, but jobs that serve are not among the ‘high pay’ options. If we give our highest value to power and greed, why are we surprised at what the world around us becomes?

This is about values we respect as a society. Who are your heroes?
Who do you wish to emulate? Who do children around you wish to be?





Seeds of Peace 50 – Sharing

In schools of fish, there is a sharing pattern that takes place. Fish swimming at the front eat while those on the sides and at the rear watch for dangers. Then the fish at the front drop back and all move-up to have their turn eating.

While two or more crows are on the ground eating, one crow sits high on a tree watching for dangers. They take turns in the tree watching while the others eat.

Traditionally, tribal warriors felt it an honor to bring back food from the hunts for the elderly and sick not able to provide for themselves. *The warriors most honored were the ones who kept the least for themselves in all things.*

Imagine a delicious, warm apple pie at the table for 100 people. One person takes 99% of the pie for himself, leaving the other 99 people with a few crumbs for their share. That is our economy's share of wealth. Tomorrows pies have the same results day after day, getting even smaller with each year passed. What kind of dynamics would follow after a while? Would there not be huge resentment? Envy? Anger? It would be a pot simmering, roiling to a boil, ready to spill over and it does daily with violence, crime, road rage, and disregard for one another.

The world has enough for all. There is enough to fill the needs of all, but it cannot sustain the greed of governments, special interests, corporate interests, and the greed of individuals already taking the most, all of whom place little value on the resource limitations of earth and the economic poverty of many people.

'We the People' cannot forget those who are hungry, without adequate medical care, shut-away, excluded from equal education-fair pay-work opportunities, or forgotten by those who are supposed to represent all the people.

What can you and i share today with someone? And tomorrow?



Open our hearts.



Seeds of Peace 51 – Yards

An elderly woman speaking----

“I miss the yards. Oh, I know people still have yards, but like many things they are not the same anymore. Yards used to snuggle around homes with grasses of different textures and colors, rolling up and down like home-patched quilts. Not the flat, ‘instant lawns’ of today rolled-out like synthetic scratchy greenish blankets. One knows the difference between a home-spun quilt and a flat imitation blanket from a plastic bag.”

“The yard trees were tall and sturdy with deep roots, wizened from the trunk grooves of age and character. Not short saplings shoved in the fake flat lawns with roots still wrapped in burlap bags for goodness sakes. Roots should be born from the ground, grow up in the ground, rising through the ground like a birth from Mother Earth. Instant trees like instant lawns just seem ‘off’ somehow. They are not truly rooted.”

“There was only our own rhyme or reason to where flowers or bushes were planted and grown. Flowers were free to create their rainbow of colors. Now people have ‘landscape designers’ who tell what flowers should be planted and where in a uniform appearance of size and color, lined-up like uniformed stiff soldiers in a parade of some sort. We have lost our connection to the earth somehow when we don’t dig our own hands into it, plant our own seeds and nurture their birth like a midwife for Mother Earth, our bond to her.”

“Yards were alive. People tended their own gardens. Children ran and played in the yards. Now we don’t want the kids to ‘mess up the lawn’. I miss someone sleeping lazily in a hammock strung between the shade of two old trees; couples reflecting on a sunset waiting for the moon to appear, rocking on a yard swing. People today sit on decks and concrete patios under store-bought umbrellas when yard trees were natural umbrellas. Many children’s feet have never even connected to the grass and earth, only knowing concrete sidewalks, asphalt or shopping-mall floors. When yards were yards, shoes came off at summer’s school recess and didn’t get put back on until fall.”

“What have we gained with instant pre-fab houses, instant lawns, instant little trees in bags, instant flowers? What have we lost? Oh, where are the yards? I so much miss the yards”...*Progress should not leave the human spirit behind.*





Seeds of Peace 52 – Active Peace

While some oppose peace to maintain power or status quo, nearly all people in the world have a desire for peace. There are many who meditate or pray for peace individually or in groups. These are certainly powerful energies and needed, but more is required to attain peace.

Someone may say, “I want to be a professional golfer,” or “I want to be a business millionaire,” or a ballerina. They could pray and wish for these things, but they will not happen without learning, practice, active participation, dedication and sacrifices to make these things happen. Before walking across the country, I trained by starting to walk a few miles a day, then 10, then 15, then 20, walking over 1500 miles training, walking-up tall sand dunes to build strength. Attaining peace is not just praying or wishing for it. We must be actively participating in the process of peace: learning about it, training ourselves in peaceful ways, dedicating ourselves to it, learning to be peaceful among family-friends-coworkers at all times, sacrificing (ego, pride, comfort) when necessary to attain peace.

It can take many forms: join a peace/social change group; work to elect politicians who reflect peaceful ways for people and the environment; communicate via computer-telephone-letter to elected officials encouraging peaceful initiatives and discouraging non-peaceful proposals; teach children about peace; participate in peace walks, peace vigils, earth-care. Peace seeks win options for all parties with benefits for all parties—seek out these options instead of hardline positions.

We have made this nation and world by what some have done and by what too many of us have allowed to be done. We have given away our power to some who have not used it well. We must exercise our voice and energy to direct our course. Do pray or meditate for peace but be actively pursuing peace for the children and all to come.





Seeds of Peace 53 – Different Values

Following are a few actual historical excerpts from high-ranking government officials of the late 1800's. The excerpts are related to new laws to arbitrarily replace 'Indian Treaties' and Reservation communal lands with separate land allotments so that government-miners-settlers could take more treaty lands.

“The common fields (tribal lands) are the seat of barbarism. The separate farm (allotments) is the door to Indian civilization.”

“The Indian must be imbued with the exalting egotism of American civilization, so that he will say “I” instead of “we” (tribe), and “this is mine” instead of “this is ours.”

“The Indian must end his thinking of from tribe to religious society to clan and to family, with the individual coming last. Indians must look out for their own self-interests first.”

“We must make the Indian more intelligently selfish.”

Separate-Ego-I-Mine-Self Interest First- Selfish...who had the right values?

These were the values of Euro-American men in power, and unfortunately still highly valued today. It is based on individualism, ego, possession, status, accumulation, greed and 'me first' without any value connection to group cooperation and consideration that had existed in Native America.

Traditional Native ways were a community circle of sharing. In similar tribal Native old stories, “It is told of a light skinned people coming. If they come in a good way following Spirit, it will be a balancing of their gifts (invention) with our gifts (earth harmony). These are the Original Instructions. If they do not come in a good way, all could be lost for all there is.”

How do we like the 'I' versus 'we' in our society? Let us consider 'the all' more broadly. Let us consider the 'global family' we are all a part of.





Seeds of Peace 54 – Sarafina

The following is from the 1992 movie “*Sarafina*” about South African apartheid. The character, Sarafina, a young teenage girl coming of age, writes and presents this poem....

*The nation is crying. The cattle are gone.
The old men are prisoners. The young men have fled.
Old women and babies now in Soweto,
Weep for the pain of Africa.*

*The Black nation is dying.
Who will lead us to the day of peace?
The Black nation is dying.
Oh Mama, I am crying, for the day of peace.*

I have added....

*The world is crying. The air is dying.
The poor are prisoners. The water is tainted. The food is poisoned.
Weep for the children to come.*

*The world is dying.
We must walk and lead to the day of peace.
The world is crying, for the day of peace.*

Hear the ‘cry of the earth’ and hear ‘the cry of the children’.





Seeds of Peace 55 – It Is Time

Reckless & random violence is upon us, it is time.
Greed & materialism is upon us, it is time.
Racial divisions & hate groups are rising again, it is time.
Children & youth killing each other, it is time.
Political leaders deaf to the cries of people & the earth, it is time.
The dying of trees, rivers, icecaps, it is time.
The extinction of thousands of creatures, never to be again, it is time.
The rising of earthquakes, tornadoes, droughts, tides, it is time.

We are surviving, not living, it is time.
We are dissatisfied, it is time.
We desire to live with quality of life for all, it is time.
We desire peace & harmony among all, it is time.
We desire a healthy, vibrant, vital environment, it is time.

We must make a healthy, peaceful, inclusive world for all people and children, and for the next seven generations to come. We are each a voice, thoughts and actions of how we and our children will live. We choose. We decide. We act. It is time.

We choose everyday...thoughts, words, actions, judgments, prejudices, caring, sharing, respect, anger, fear, waste, consumption...what we have is our collective result. *It is time.* It is a time of choice, to evolve to a humanity and respect of all, people and earth. It is you. It is me. *It is time...* There is so much more, if we will only allow ourselves to open our hearts to it. *It is time.*





Seeds of Peace 56 – Path of Peace

By feeling satisfied with what I have, i feel no envy.

By giving freely to those who would take, i feel no anger.

By understanding the fears of others, i feel no hate.

By accepting the differences of others, i feel no judgment.

By recognizing the specialness of all, i feel no self-importance.

By seeing the wonders of the earth and all there is, i feel humble.

By doing the best i can do, i feel my worth.

By accepting what i cannot do, i feel humility.

By these feelings, i walk the Path of Peace.

As stated in another writing, i avoid capitalizing ‘i’ in writings. If i write you in mid-sentence the y is not capitalized, and i am of no more importance than you. Why should writing imply that i am?





Seeds of Peace 57 – Final Seeds

These ‘Seeds of Peace’ are just that, seeds. They can’t grow without cultivation. Many of the themes have been said or written before, maybe in different ways. I have tried to express what comes from within me.

This is June 2019. If anyone comes across this book after a year or two, it is likely i have passed from Stage IV cancer, or its complications, to whatever lies beyond.

It is hoped and prayed in time the country is or on its way to becoming kinder, gentler. All the writings herein are valid truths *that can be lived*. I have lived by them all my life. They are far more than written words. All is possible.

My mother’s father, who was Mi’kmaq native of New Brunswick, Canada, had ‘the sight’. In the 1920’s and early 30’s, he would tell my mother while they listened to Red Sox games on the radio, that someday there would be boxes that showed pictures, not just voices like the radio. He told her of machines that would be able to think like people. He told her about telephones where people would see each other when they talked to each other. He could not read or write but knew and described to her many things that have come to be.

I cannot ‘see’ things like he could, but what i have ‘seen’ is that *we will evolve*, that we are still very early in our evolution. We have had iron ages, industrial ages, but what will come is the *Age of Humanity*. We will evolve from within to better understand each other, take better care of each other, be more considerate of each other and earth. This will come with political evolution. All this i have ‘seen’.

The political evolution i’ve *seen* and written of for decades is when women have a representative role in politics that is representative of female population (51%). From the balancing of men/women in politics, the policies and laws of the country will be far more life-giving, more equitable for all, more inclusive to serve all.

It won’t come easily. New birth does not happen without some struggle and pain, but the new life resulting for all will begin our path to our greatest selves.

I have ‘seen’ our human evolution, what it will be, how we will be, and it is so wondrous. It could happen within the lifetime of the children, but more likely the grandchildren (at least to have really started by then). It is still up to all to help it become. It can’t and won’t happen if we are not willing to work for it.

I hope these and other writings help in that regard for whatever little bit they can. They do offer the ‘seeds of peace’ to help but need the gardeners of peace.

Be well. Be strong. Be peaceful in all ways.

Open our hearts to peace and healing between all people.

Open our hearts to provide and protect for all children of the earth.

Open our hearts to respect for the earth and all the gifts of earth.

Open our hearts to end exclusion, violence, and fear among all.

Thanks is given for the gifts of today and every day.

May light shine upon you, within you and from you,

Always in peace and love.....longriver

(*For children teaching stories of people/earth respect i wrote, ‘Open Our Hearts’— Contact me for free pdf copy, alyoops@comcast.net, if not included. If i am no longer ‘available’ contact deer Sullivan, a collaborator who wrote activity sections for it, deersplace@yahoo.com.)

I can also send pdf copy of ‘Walking Turtle Island’ (cross-country walk) if you would like to read that journey.

Acknowledgement is given to Creative Commons for use of seed graphics, and thanks is given to all who have given me support and inspiration through life.

