

Peace on Earth

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~ By Kirsten Antony, R.N. ~

Peace on Earth is a sentiment we see so often this time of year. It is a sentiment many of us seek to express especially right now given the political climate and the divisiveness now seen all around the world. In many families across our country, family feuds have begun and holiday gatherings have been cancelled due to the tension and strong emotions involved. The holidays can be difficult for many people who have suffered a loss of a loved one, those that live alone, and now for those that are feeling unaccepted by their families because of their political beliefs. I find this a heartbreaking situation for many. The holidays should be a time of joy, love and peace.

Here are some ideas of ways to bring peace into our lives this holiday season, or anytime during the year:

- Many people find themselves needing to express themselves on social media sites or in person only to find that they are losing family and friends over their viewpoints. Not to negate feelings to vent or speak your mind, but try expressing yourself in a more personal way. Try journaling. Journaling is a great way to examine your feelings and the point of view of others. It can help us understand why we are feeling the way we do and writing your thoughts down on paper can be very cathartic. Also, writing ideas on paper can help us process our emotions and therefore be better able to communicate those ideas.
- Reminisce on fond childhood memories. What brought joy into your life as a child? What types of creative pursuits did you have? Being creative can bring a sense of peace and purpose into our lives. It's never too late to try a new creative endeavor. Let your imagination take flight.
- Take a look at the natural world. Revel in the simplicity of the intricacies of a snowflake. The warmth of sunshine on a cold winter's day. The constant purr of a fuzzy cat on your lap. Take time to slow and observe what a miracle everything can be.
- Be grateful for all the blessings in your life. If it seems hard to start a gratitude list, start with simple things like clean water, food to eat and a warm, safe place you call home.
- Spend time in nature, with animals and/or with children. There is a purity in nature, with animals and with children that will energize your spirit.
- Give your time as a volunteer to an organization you feel compassion for. If you are politically motivated and inspired, take a look at local politics. Where can you make a difference?
- Take time to be silent. Take time to pray and/or meditate if you are inclined to do so. Once we as a society realize that peace begins with ourselves, we can start to realize Peace on Earth.

Whatever your religious or political belief system may be, one thing we all can agree upon is that we are all part of the human race. May peace be with you.

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