

9-11 Taught Us That World Peace Is A Long Way Off, So How Can We Personally Address This Issue

The advent of the fifth anniversary of the 9-11 mass catastrophe at the World Trade Center has brought about a flurry of activity. Not only commemorative ceremonies but also writings and sermons have come to the fore concerning the lessons such a destructive act of terrorism has forced us to confront.

So, how do we do that? Forgive. First it seems to me we need to see where we are holding judgments and what they are about. Judgments are sneaky guys to identify sometimes because they are hidden behind the huge banners we carry in our minds that say "I'm right" in a thousand different ways.

A travesty like 9-11 wiped out hundreds of lovely, deserving, innocent people and left their families and their worlds teetering and toppling. For those of us not directly affected, there is no way not to be involved. We're all "just plain folks" like the ones who went to work that day and never returned home. We identify, we cringe at what we imagine and we wonder, sometimes late at night while gazing into the dark, what lurks.

Hate lurks and it's hard to understand. If we keep enough distance from it, we can see it as generic, sadistic and insane. Yet if we reduce the unseen enemy down to a single person, we can see that we, too, are probably the unseen enemy in his eyes.

With that in mind, it may be time for all of us to look at forgiveness in a new light. What is there that we don't forgive in ourselves? What do we refuse to look at closely? How do we keep our righteous indignation in place?

Most of us thoroughly dislike the word "projection"...its definition and implications. Yet, self-hate is what sets us off on the never-ending trail of blaming. Isn't it possible that deep healing has to start within and extend out from there? If I can see my mistakes and learn from them...if I can accept myself as human without dodging the responsibility of needing to learn and grow...can't I learn to forgive myself?

Huge world problems, huge political and economic issues and, yes, disasters, are beyond most of us. We don't know where to begin any serious rectification. So we pontificate or do our best not to dwell on it.

Why not look at our own much, much smaller worlds and consider going about cleaning them up? Isn't that the only way it can be done? Why not decide, as we honor the memory of 9-11 to not be part of the critical mass of hatred afoot in the world? Perhaps we can look at ourselves more honestly and at others with less hostility and make some real progress if we own up to the personal positions we hold.

Forgiveness can start within and extend outward. Most of us have quite a lot of homework to do before we can be a Light to others. In the name of 9-11, and all of those who were involved on both sides of the spoken and unspoken issues, we can start the seed of world peace right now by creating peace in ourselves, in our relationships, and in the workplace. We don't have to say a word...we just need to do it, mean it, and stick with it.

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