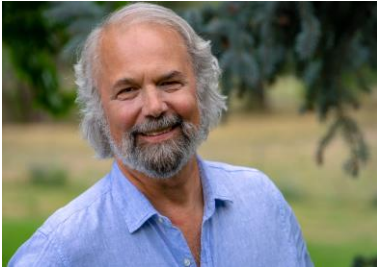


HOW PEACE BEGINS

PULSE OF SPIRIT
SEPTEMBER 26, 2018



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(A group of Sunrise Ranch residents offered statements on “Peace.”)

Peace begins as the kiss of dawn. Deep waters rise, giving the breath of life, renewing old dust. It is our starlit anthem, our sweetest dream, our union in glory.

Peace begins with curiosity, as through the eyes of a child once again, playing in this magical world. What wonders lie behind your eyes? What hidden gems lie just beyond? What magical purpose are you here to fill?

Peace begins with a generous heart and a still and vibrant mind.

Peace begins with accepting the One within self, the One that is omnipresent, the One that is open to the unfoldment of life energy and to the movement of life, and the unfoldment of this creative process called life.

Peace begins with the realization that all religions and cultures are beautiful flowers

coming from the one root; and all turned to the same sun, the source of Being, knowing that we are all one and connected.

Peace is the revelation of the divine reality, which is everywhere present. As we choose love over fear, and kindness over condemnation, the gateway of peace is opened and we return to our natural state of Being.

Peace begins with love—love for ourselves, love for one another, love for mankind, and love for this planet and everything in it.

Peace begins with the thought “I have a place in the divine design of love for this planet,” and acting upon that. I love my life to me.

Peace begins with the relinquishing of the struggle to find the strategic thought, the controlled feeling, the correct expression, and engaging in and abiding with the current of vital, connective, coherent feeling that is the precious present moment.

Peace begins with the choice to live from a place of love and respect for yourself, others, and all of life. The repeating of that choice becomes a habit. The embodiment of that habit becomes character. The expression of that character becomes a way of life.

Peace begins with choosing to love yourself and others enough to always show up in your world in integrity, despite the circumstances around you. Peace begins with choosing to be the face of love when your brothers and sisters need to be reminded of their own divinity.

Peace begins with one simple thread woven through the fabric of consciousness, moving inward and outward, within us and between us.

Peace begins with letting go of the struggle, surrendering to the flow, being engaged with the world with compassion and courage. May peace prevail on earth.

Peace begins with a momentary recognition that our birthright is wholeness. Peace begins with acknowledging that our innate responsibility is to live in a way that is life-giving to all beings on earth.

Peace begins with acceptance—acceptance of our humanity, but even more so, acceptance of our divinity. In remembering, knowing, and accepting all pieces of ourselves, we then accept all pieces of others, because we are all one. With acceptance comes peace. So

ultimately peace begins with me, and peace begins with you.

For me, peace means love and generosity to others.

Peace begins with meditation in the inner body.

We are one and we are many. We are each one person, and there are many of us who are awakening to the origins of peace and who are bringers of peace to this world. All of us knowing peace together are consciously one body of people. Ultimately, this can include all of humankind. And yet we know that isn't the current state of affairs. We don't live in a world that is full of peace in the human experience. Our culture has highly developed science and technology, and knowledge that is piling higher and higher in the data banks of the world, all speaking to the tremendous potential of the human race.

And yet we sense that there is something that has yet to line up for us as the human race for it all to make sense. Somehow our technology and our science has raced ahead of our learning about ourselves and our place on this planet. In important ways, our spirituality and our religion has failed us. As wonderful as the teachings of religion and spirituality can be, if you look at the human race, the answer to what we are facing is not yet present in our shared awareness. We don't have a spirituality that has united us, that has told us of our oneness, that has brought us into peace. And so we have to

believe that there is some deeper knowing that we must gain access to if we are to fulfill our great potential.

I don't believe that there is any institution that can give you or me that knowing. It's not present in an institution. It is present in our heart of hearts, in the depths of a human soul. There is a connection and there is an innate knowing that we have somehow passed over in all our learning, and in all our scientific knowledge and technological development. In that deepest of places, we know who we are, and we feel our connection to the planet. We know peace in that place. But with all the mental activity, all the busyness, all the cultural norms that we are attempting to live up to, somehow we skip over this most primal knowing.

Down through the ages there have been people who have brought this knowing to the fore. And even in our own time, there are people who speak out of this knowing. Some are known and shown in the media, and there are many, like you and me, who are hardly known publicly but who nonetheless carry a deep awareness into their life and into their world. We are gathering in number; we are connecting through things like this Unify broadcast. There are awakening people around the world who are connecting, finding each other, because this primal knowing that we all share is *one* knowing, and it is telling us that indeed we are one people.

Coming to the deep awareness in our heart of hearts, we know that it is the same life that

moves in each of us and the same love that beats in our heart. In its purest form, it is a universal love. And while that love is relevant in our individual worlds—it's relevant to us as a human being, it is relevant to the person next to us and the people in our communities and families—it is, in its purest form, a universal love that we hold in common. We confine it at our own peril. Because if all it is to us is a local experience of love of "me and mine," then it pits us against anyone who is out of that little local container. And so we are becoming champions of Universal Love, finding ways to bring it into our life and make it real.

In this community, Sunrise Ranch—about a hundred people who live and work together and bring these ideas into the world and make them real every day in the most practical of circumstances—this is what we are learning: that there is a daily practice of making love real. Of course, it is already real—it is already the most real thing about us and about the reality that we live in. When we look at the hills of Eden Valley, Green Ridge on the one hand and the red sandstone of the rimrock on the other, we see peace. Peace is the reality. Love is the reality. But somehow, in our human disconnect, we get out of touch with that. We get out of touch with what is real. So it has to become real to *us*. It becomes real to us every day, for you and for me, as we face the challenges of human life.

For me, sometimes, that's you, is it not? And the same for you: it's me, or that person next to you—a certain situation, a certain person or

group of people. It could be a family member, even a loved one, a community member, somebody in the organization that you're associated with. There is your challenge, and there is your opportunity.

We find that the reality of peace isn't just a sunny-day activity. It isn't just a time for special meditation. It is a practice. It is a walking and a living meditation. It is a daily practice that has to become a momentary practice. And the practice is the discipline to acknowledge that only love is real, no matter what reality my personality may tend to live into.

That seeming reality of separation and conditional love ends here, in this moment. We bring the purest form of love into the immediate. The purest form is Universal Love. For that to become real for us and to saturate our world, it has to not only be acknowledged as being universal but also unconditional. I love you not just because you deserve it—because sometimes I think you don't! I love you because love is who I am, love is what is real, love is what I do, peace is what I bring. And even in the most extreme of circumstances, that is the answer. It is what overcomes. As Martin Luther King, Jr., sang with others, "We shall overcome." We overcome because love and peace do overcome all things when that is our unconditional expression.

Peace is reality. It is known when we transcend the localized sense of self. Yes, I am a human being. Yes, I live through my personality; yes,

there are things that are immediately important to me. There is my immediate set of friends and family, community—all that is true. I have a localized sense of myself, a localized sense of where I live and the world in which I live. But I also have a transcendent sense of myself. I am that love that is moving in all things. I am that reality of peace that is in your heart as well as mine, that is in *all* hearts. And I move in my world increasingly as that reality.

I call upon that reality because I find that I have, like you, personality reactions, localized personality-based thoughts, thinking that is limited and does not take me where I want to go. And then I look around and I see everybody else is doing the same. I see countries doing the same, I see religions doing the same—living in some localized, personalized sense of reality that separates people and nations, organizations, ethnicities, cultures, from each other. I see it happening all around and I know you do too. And we know there must be an answer for that.

So we have an answer. It is that primal knowing and that primal spirituality we were born with. It is living out of our knowing of what is already connected with all people everywhere and that begs us to express that, to *be* that. And in being it, we are calling to our brothers and sisters everywhere to be that, to acknowledge what is already present in the deepest place of the heart of a human being.

I have a story of how that became real for me, as I am sure we all do. So in telling my story, I invite you to honor your own story of

awakening to the reality of peace and the need for peace. I was a young man of sixteen while the Vietnam War was raging, and thousands upon thousands were dying. I looked around at the world and saw how impossible it all seemed. There are so many things about that that haven't changed that much, except that more and more people are awakening. Looking at the world then, I saw no answer for the way it was going, and I became aware that not only was there a lack of peace in the world at large—in Vietnam and in the United States—but there was a lack of peace in me. And that only made it worse.

So, like many others of my generation, I railed at the war. In November 1969, I went down to the Mall in Washington, D.C., on a bus, joining with half a million other people to protest. I ended up very near the band shell. After many speeches and musical performances, Pete Seeger, with Arlo Guthrie and Peter, Paul and Mary began to sing: *All we are saying is give peace a chance.*

Later Pete spoke of how he looked around and saw children up on their fathers' shoulders, and people swaying throughout the Mall; this mass of humanity, singing *All we are saying is give peace a chance.* Somehow in that mass of humanity we accessed that urge of Universal Love that was in our hearts. And at some point in that chant it ceased being a protest and became a prayer. My young heart came to peace in that prayer. I knew I had touched something that I wanted my life to be about; something that I wanted to spread around the world.

We sang for twenty minutes. *All we are saying is give peace a chance.* Give that reality, that urge that's in the human heart, a chance to come out and make itself known, to be activated in our culture. Let it become real between you and me, to break down the barriers of separation that a localized sense of personality has caused. There is something larger at work that unites us, not because we try to get all stuck together somehow to make it happen but because we realize that the love that's inside us—the very power of our Being that keeps us alive—is universal. What is in me is within you. It is the same love, the same reality. My life, like yours, has been a life of awakening to that reality. When you truly awaken to that reality, you cannot do what you once did. You *cannot* do it! It's not real.

Where we live, here at Sunrise Ranch, is ten miles out of town from Loveland, Colorado, nestled in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. When twelve people originally came here in 1945, it was down a dirt road, and there wasn't much through traffic. It was quieter then. Since then, the road has been improved and there are motorcycles that come through on a Sunday afternoon. The population of Loveland is now more than ten times what it was then. Still, sometimes people come here and speak of the world outside of Sunrise Ranch as "*the real world*"—as if we live in some secluded fantasy life.

Isn't this exactly the problem? The culture as we have created it out of a sense of separation seems real. Fear is *False Evidence Appearing Real.*

Our culture is like that. It appears real. There are facets of a nightmare in that culture, for sure. A nightmare can seem real; it's real to the person having the nightmare! Our culture seems real to us. We are living into that culture, there's no question about that. But is it real? Or is it some kind of shared illusion? Or is it simply that we are at *this* step of the evolution of our awareness, on the verge of a global breakthrough to something else? Is our conscious cultural evolution at a point where we have developed science and technology, knowledge of all kinds except the most important kind?

And so here we are, struggling with chip capacity that doubles every year, with an Internet that is dominated by powerful financial and political interests, with nuclear power, struggling with all this technology without the soul understanding to know how to use it. Perhaps what is really happening is that this urge of creativity that is within our own hearts and within the heart of all of humanity is there, seeking to come out, knocking at our door and in some ways driving us crazy until it does. We hear the knocking, we feel the urge inside us, and then we look around and we see a world that is divided in so many ways—seemingly off its rocker, to put it kindly. And then we feel the distress in our own being because there is the urge to love—the urge to bring peace to all our relationships. And yet we have other things going on, don't we? And what is the answer?

The human race is on a journey of grace. Individually, each one of us is on a journey of

grace. And what does that mean? A journey of grace is a journey to a massive collision with reality. Not the seeming reality of the culture in which we live—that's apparent enough, but that's not what I'm talking about. We are headed for a massive collision with the reality of what is within all of Creation, all of nature, all around us. That is real. This is also a massive collision with the depth of our own soul and the teachings of love that are present within our deepest heart of hearts. We are colliding with that. We are colliding with how things work.

Apparently, the technology that we are using in the world today isn't attuned to how things really work in reality. Yes, it works for a while, for our own benefit. We like plastic—we carry liquids in it and it's helpful, seemingly; it works in that sense. But it doesn't really work with reality. And so we are on a collision course with reality, and we are waking up as a part of that collision.

That collision implies some kind of cataclysmic undoing of the way we have seen things, some kind of release of the human heart from the hatred and the fear that have been present. It is the kind of collision where we finally just surrender and we open. We surrender to the love that is within us. We give up and just decide, *I think I'm just going to be that love. I think that the way to go here is just to express this Universal Love that keeps knocking at my door. That's the only thing that's really real and reliable. This is the only sane reaction to a world that seems to have gone mad in so many ways.*

The only sane response to this world *is* love. It is to simply decide that in the face of all that is transpiring, I am going to express this which is in my heart and find ways to make that real for me and for the people around me, in all the creative ways I can express it in my life. And what seemed like work will become a labor of that love in service to the world, and I will find work that allows me to express a heart of service and a heart of love, so that every day and all day, every moment, can be a practice of love.

I remember, as a young man, realizing that I'd forgotten how to smile, and I had forgotten how to express words that carried the current of the love that I felt deep within me. Have you ever found that for yourself? Have you ever realized that what was inside you wasn't coming out, and that you were somehow not being true to that, somehow being false and contrived? Oh, that hurt for me, I can tell you! It hurt as much as the Vietnam War outside of me, to realize that I myself was being false.

Our only sane answer to that falseness, outside or inside, is to be as true as we know how to be in the expression of what is looking to come out of us and into the world, true and creative. What I have learned over the years is that that power of Universal Love that is within is not only a motivating factor—it's not only empowering for me as an individual. It is on the carrier wave of that Universal Love where there is wisdom that comes. How can I be of service? What are the enlightened ways I could be in the world? What technology would truly serve the

purposes of reality? Love knows.

So, like you, my life is a collision with reality. Religion says that there is a God up there somewhere, an invisible reality, and I wouldn't deny that. There is something we touch into, the source of all things, which is of a much vaster scale than we are as an individual. So that is part of reality—opening up to what is invisible and vast and powerful, and wise. We can be in touch with that invisible reality and allow it to come through us. It isn't just up above us—it's within us and waiting for expression by us when we open to it. And it does carry the power of the Universal Love that is within us and within all people.

On the carrier wave of that Universal Love is intelligence and wisdom of the real kind. It took some kind of intelligence to create an atom bomb, and that's *not* the kind of intelligence I'm talking about. I'm talking about the intelligence of reality, of how things are made and how they are meant to be made through us in harmony with all Creation. That is what we are called to as a human race and as human beings, and the only answer for peace in the world. We have the technology today to reverse so many of the awful trends that we see at work in the human experience. We have the science, the technology—and what is missing? Us. Us, and our primal knowing of how to use any of that wisely.

And yet we are awakening to that primal knowing, which is the knowing of what is real. It is amazing that all true wisdom begins with a

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surrender to that. There are many things for us to learn as a race, following that surrender. But the first point of wisdom for us as a young species in the universe, finding our way, is surrender. This is how peace begins.

This poem is entitled “Love, in All Its Glory.”

*Love, in all its glory
reveals itself to the
tranquil mind
and thankful heart.*

*So draw near to the majesty,
embrace the peace within you,
and so be embraced by love itself
which is in your every breath.*

*This is the day
to let go of all old things
and even if you have been born
many times before
to enter this world now
as if for the first time.*

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Service from the Dome Chapel at Sunrise Ranch

Live-streamed through Unify.org to celebrate the

World Peace Day

September 23, 2018



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