

Fundamental Principles for Building a Global Culture of Peace

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1. Introduction: Global Desire for Peace

- a. The desire for peace is global: that is, everyone without exception is seeking for peace
- b. Koichiro Matsuura (UNESCO): “The UN and UNESCO were founded to bring about a world at peace”
- c. United Nations: Charter indicates its dedication and mandate to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war
- d. In most cultures around the world, the prayers for the dead to “Rest In Peace” underscores the desire for eternal peace, even by those who advocate wars and died in wars

2. World Characterized by Conflicts/Violence and Wars

- a. Despite the global desire for peace, we live in a world characterized by conflicts, violence, crises and wars, and has inflicted itself and humanity with unimaginable pains and destruction
- b. Varying level of conflicts (within each individual, between individuals, families, communities and nations/organizations)
- c. A global culture of violence, conflict and war has been established with institutions and organizations promoting and advocating violence, wars and crises being given prominent reports and attention. Huge resources are being committed to war-making and war-keeping on the foundations of war-building initiatives
 - i. Global culture of war established (living in conflict and warring against each other)
 - ii. Global communities/institutions for war emerging (war-canoe houses, warlords, man o war, war colleges, etc)
 - iii. Global resources for war (huge resources are budgeted for war-making and war-keeping and advanced technological development of WMD and war tools, etc)

3. The Fundamental Challenge today: The global transformation from world of wars to a world of peace

a. From World of Wars to a new World of Peace

- i. From a global culture of war to a global culture of peace
- ii. From global communities/institutions of war to global communities/institutions of peace
- iii. From resources/technologies for war to resources/technologies for peace

b. Mandates and Declarations for Peace

- i. UNESCO constitutional mandate: since wars begin in the minds of men (and women), it is in the minds of men (and women) that the seeds of peace must be planted
 - ii. UN: At the eve of the new millennium, the UN General Assembly proclaimed the year 2000 as International Year for the Culture of Peace and the decade 2011 – 2010 as the international decade for a culture of peace and non violence for the children of the world
 - iii. September 21: designated as International Day of Peace
- c. Making these declarations and aspirations to become substantial realities is the most pressing task before humankind today. We need to renew our commitment to the goal of global peace and build a world that is at peace with itself in the new millennium, especially as we begin the second decade of the 21st century and “7th millennium”.

4. Exploring Strategies for Building a Global Culture of Peace

- a. We need to build and establish a global culture of peace. This will however require the establishment of fundamental principles that will guide the emergence of a culture of peace at the global level and applicable in all local places

- b. What are the fundamental principles that will facilitate the realization of the desire for global peace?
 - i. Applicability of such principles at all levels of the society, from individuals, families, communities, nations and the world at large
 - ii. Such principles should be desired for, known by and can be implemented everywhere, by everybody and every time
 - iii. Such principles should promote the philosophy of collective reliance among the diverse human population and groups, such that each person, family or nation can live with others and for the sake of others
 - iv. Such principles should establish the global standard for determining peaceful thoughts, words and actions by individuals, families, communities, nations and regional blocs
 - v. Such principles should establish the fundamental order for the emergence of global peace

5. Fundamental Principles for Building a Global Culture of Peace

a. Promoting Common Parenthood Among the Human Family

- i. Strengthening the emerging global family based on the realization of a common ancestry for all people and the need for recognition of a global parent
- ii. With common parents for all, human beings are therefore brothers and sisters and should be our brothers/sisters keepers NOT killers
- iii. From above, the lost ideal of true parenthood by Adam and Eve and the violent sibling relationship between Cain and Abel can be restored and seeds of peace emerge

b. Understanding the Wisdom in the Prayers to “Rest In Peace” after Death

- i. Human beings need to understand the existence of life after death, and the relationship between life in the womb and life after birth on one hand, and life on earth and life after death on the other hand. Hence, the consciousness that life on earth is preparatory for life after death is very fundamental in shaping attitudes, behaviors and conduct of people.
- ii. Human beings have dual characteristics of internal/invisible eternal nature (spirit) and external/visible limited form (body) and peaceful persons maintain harmonious relationship within the internal nature and between the internal nature and external form

c. Global Peace Begins in the Local Family: (Peace is globally scoped but locally focused)

- i. The family is the primary institution for peace, where we are taught and we learn to live and grow in peace and love. As family members learn to live in peace with one another and caring for each other, we are acquiring the skills to live with other members of the global family as our brothers and sisters too.
- ii. The four realms of global peaceful living are taught/learnt/practiced in the local family
 - 1. Realm of peaceful children: son and daughter living in peace with their parents
 - 2. Realm of peaceful sibling: brothers and sisters living together in peace
 - 3. Realm of peaceful couples: husband and wife living together in peace
 - 4. Realm of peaceful parents: father and mother living in peace with their children

d. Promoting a Global Culture of Collective Reliance through Living With Others and Living for the Sake of Others

- i. Establishing a tradition of growing beyond self reliance/independence to collective reliance/interdependence
- ii. Relationship of giving and receiving, investing self to harvest in others and by others. Wealth measured NOT in terms of harvest by self but harvest by others through self investment. Living for the sake of other people and living with other people is key

- e. **Building Sustainable Global Partnership beyond the Traditional Barriers of Religion, Region and Resources**
 - i. Peace is NOT merely the absence of WAR but rather the presence of harmony, cooperation, and interdependence
 - ii. Loving one's enemy can reconcile divided relationship. Winners vs losers working together in cooperative partnership.
 - iii. "We never get rid of an enemy by meeting hate with hate. We get rid of an enemy by getting rid of enmity" – Dr. Martin Luther King Jnr.

6. How Do We Build a Global Culture of Peace

- a. Having understood the fundamental principles for a global culture of peace, we need to translate these principles and theories into a daily practice exercise.
- b. Unfortunately, human beings are born relatively ignorant of the principles for peace, and have rather lived a self contradictory lifestyle that advances conflict, crises, violence and wars. Yet, each individual has an inherent potential to live in peace
- c. We therefore need to dispel human ignorance of the ideal of peace and develop the inherent potentials for peace. There is the need to cultivate and nurture the seeds of peace in each person. The process of dispelling human ignorance of peace and developing the potential/desire for peace is through **peace education**.
- d. Hence, we need peace education in order to build a global culture of peace. Peace Education involves Teach Peace, Learn Peace and Practice Peace with the following as institutions and educators:
 - i. The family with parents as educators and children as learners
 - ii. The school with teachers as educators and students/pupils as learners
 - iii. The community with leaders as educators and citizens as learners
- e. Unfortunately, there have been contradictions in the expression of peace education through religion and scientific approach. Consequently, peace education has not been able to lead to the emergence of peaceful parents/children, peaceful teachers/students and peaceful leaders/citizens. Hence no peaceful family, school or community has emerged.
- f. A new vision of peace education is therefore needed in the new millennium, as such a program should empower and bring together parents, teachers and leaders as well as children, students and citizens to build a new culture of peace. The new vision of peace education should:
 - i. Inspire the people with a global vision of peace
 - ii. Empower the people to live and grow in peace: "Living In Peace: A Zero Conflict Lifestyle"
 - iii. Connect the people to information, to each other and to resources for peace
 - iv. Celebrate the accomplished commitment of the people to peace building.
- g. The new vision of peace education is the Global Peace Education for Educators, which focuses on providing professional development programs for educators (parents, teachers and leaders) in order to empower them to fulfill their role in the family, school and community respectively

7. The Major Themes of the Global Peace Education

- a. The Ideal Vision of Peace
 - i. Peaceful individuals (men/women) ---- peaceful families/community/nation/world
 - ii. Origin of Peace = God/Allah
- b. The Root Causes of Conflict/Violence/War
 - i. Selfishness/greed/self reliance, putting I before others and investing others for self
 - ii. Selfish/contradictory individuals ---- selfish/contradictory family/community/world
- c. The Principles of Conflict Resolution

- i.** From selfishness to selflessness
 - ii.** Global conflict resolution from individual conflict resolution
 - iii.** Born in war/conflict to be “re-born in peace”
 - iv.** Cultural Integration, Regional Harmony and Effective Resource Utilization
- 8.** To build a global culture of peace, we need to institutionalize peace education in the family, at schools and communities. Parents, teachers and leaders as well as families, schools and communities need to become peaceful individuals and institutions.