

## PEACE THROUGH SPIRITUAL GROWTH

*Seeking peace through laws, shared likes, common beliefs, or empires is like seeking water in creeks and swimming pools instead of in the ocean. Creeks and swimming pools sooner or later dry up. Belief systems, laws, and empires sooner or later end in conflict. The ocean is the source of every creek, lake, and pool, via rainfall. The heart is the source of peace in every individual, via love.*

Through the years, people have tried to develop peace strategies through various means. Some have done so by promoting unity, others through religion, and yet others through legal means. None of these roads has led to lasting peace. If we look at history, we see that each strategy is associated with its own limitations.

If we look more closely, we see that a common thread runs through the different limitations associated with peace seeking: lack of spiritual consciousness. Spiritual consciousness, as defined in the prior chapters, refers to the direct knowledge we have of the ourselves and the world, before any thoughts arise in the mind. Because all thoughts carry the sense of self—"I'm thinking about *that*"—and because the sense of self is itself a thought—only spiritual consciousness can circumvent the root of conflict. It can do this because it doesn't recognize a distinction between self and other. Without a sense of separation between self and other, only unity remains. If this perspective were to form the basis of peace solutions, any number of specific approaches would be likely to work. However, as long as spiritual consciousness is lacking, all are doomed to fail.

## FLAWED STRATEGIES FOR PEACE

Before discussing strategies for peace that are based on spiritual consciousness, let's look at the limitations associated with what historically have been the three main ways of seeking to make peace: unity, religion, and law.

### **Peace Through Unity**

Several kinds of unity have been commonly promoted in order to realize peace: (1) unity of goals, (2) imperial order, (3) ideological unity, and (4) sentimental unity of hearts. The rationale behind these strategies is that a true unit is not split by conflict, and is therefore at peace. This reasoning, basic as it is, is flawed because it requires the unit in question to have the quality of sameness. The conformity of sameness depends on violence to stamp out all natural diversity and change. So strategies of unity will not lead to peace.

**Unity of goals.** If all people shared the same goal, or if their goals were mutually compatible, they would live together peacefully and work together successfully. For example, in England in the early Twentieth Century poor conditions and economic mayhem in the coal mining industry led to civil conflict, culminating in the general strike of 1926. However, a few years later, the British were able to unify in their efforts to defeat Hitler. At that time, they worked together and enjoyed social peace among themselves. Internal conflict became insignificant when the survival of their nation was at stake. Similar examples can be found in many times and places throughout history.

The flaw in this approach, however, is that it does not achieve lasting peace. This strategy may work for a while. In the World War II example, unity lasted during the time of crisis because it was natural for the British to share a common goal. However, it is not realistic to assume that everyone always will

have the same goal. So this strategy founders on the rocks of the diversity of personalities, interests, and cultures. To achieve peace, the exponents of this approach would have to impose their own aims and objectives on people who have different ones. Thus, they will inevitably end up propagating violence and peace will elude them.

**Imperial order.** Unity has also been conceived of in terms of imperial rule. Historically, empires have exercised a monopoly of force over multiple ethnic groups within large boundaries. Multiethnic and multicultural formations under one government constitute an empire. The Austro-Hungarian, Roman, British, French, Ottoman, Soviet, and Mongol empires can be called empires because of the multiple peoples and cultures subsumed within them, not just because of their large geographical areas. The power of an empire's military and police force over the groups inside its borders is associated with a single administration, some minimal affinity of law and culture, and a system of transportation and trade.

But the establishment of an empire requires conquest and the subjugation of entire populations. Moreover, maintaining the unity of an empire is a work of internal force and violence, not of peace. Millions of people have to be taxed, drafted, supervised, and regulated in order to administer the empire's policies; pass and enforce its legislation; support its bureaucracies; raise, train, arm, and feed its armies; fight its wars of conquest and policing; build its monuments and capitals; and keep up its exploitative hierarchy. Economic conflict arises between the net payers of taxes and the net consumers of taxes. There is ongoing fight between the beneficiaries of hegemony and those whose productive work has been seized by force. Parties form and fight to regulate other parties and avoid being regulated. Ethnic conflicts becomes chronic. For

example, Croats oppose Serbs. At the same time, Serbs oppose Slovenians. And Slovenians oppose Croats.

The unity of an empire, then, is as specious as it is temporary. So is its peace. An empire is a seething cauldron of strains, conflicts, struggles, and coercion. Rather than establishing unity or peace, empire is characterized by the systemic violation of peace and the institutionalized disruption of unity.

**Ideological unity.** Empires of one sort or another commonly support themselves with propaganda. This is their attempt at unification of minds. Until shortly before the end of the Twentieth Century, a prime example of the unification of minds through ideology was Marxist socialism. In the present day, an egalitarian ideology of political correctness, sponsored by the media and education system, holds sway over much of the United States. Scientism (i.e. scientific materialism) unifies millions of minds and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.

However, to realize peace, the unification of minds through a belief system would need to allow an openness to new evidence, discussion, and experiences of all kinds, including mystical experience. Otherwise some form of mental force would be needed to maintain the unity. This could involve suppression of evidence, repression of thought and discussion, propaganda, brainwashing, and censorship.

Suppose openness to experience and discussion were allowed by those attempting to achieve ideological unity. Then, as in the case of unity by goals, diversity of opinion would inevitably lead to conflict between those with different belief systems. I'm not suggesting there is anything wrong with freedom of thought and discussion in all areas of human enterprise, but it is not what is envisaged by those who seek peace through the unification of minds. They try

hard to monopolize the mainstream media of information and entertainment, exert control through propaganda and censorship, and demonize any contrary schools of thought. Their rejection of intellectual freedom betrays their real aim: the exploitation of others through the subjugation of their minds.

**The sentimental unity of hearts.** The strategy of unifying hearts through allegiance to a sentimental object fails to bring peace for the same reason as does the attempts at unification of minds. The objects of sentiment are too many and too contrary. Potential objects of heartfelt allegiance include a religious icon, a political party, a flag, one's family, a basketball team, a rock star. In each case, there are always competing objects. No matter how popular a rock star might become, some people will always prefer a different type of music. Those who follow one faith will never unite around the religious icon associated with a different faith. Even if everyone in a particular country were to rally around its flag, people across the border will give their allegiance to a different flag. So, unless unity is imposed by coercion, the opposite of peace will always prevail.

## **Religion**

Religion has never brought universal peace. This is true despite its role at different points throughout history as a powerful force for peace and cultural harmony. Confucianism, for instance, helped end the Warring States Period of ancient China. Christianity helped reunify the decadent Roman Empire, both East and West factions. Rabbinic Judaism blazed up as a force of peace in exilic Babylon. Islam unified the truculent Arab tribes. Buddhism was the basis for instilling peace during Ashoka's empire in the third century BCE.

These religious groups pacified and unified broken and belligerent societies. But successor states tended to demand allegiance to their finite forms and methods. Inevitably, this brought a return of conflict and war.

Of course, that's contrary to the essence of the great religions. Their core is unity with the infinite, underlying reality, and not with finite forms. Union with the Infinite is a valid way to peace. However, fundamentalist parties within various religions focus on allegiance to finite forms rather than on spiritual realization. Hence they miss the Infinite altogether. They spend their time railing against and despising other religions, which they see only as demonic competitors. In this way religion is perverted. Instead of ending power struggles, it creates them.

Fundamentalists violate unity and peace. There is a certain irony in this. Fundamentalists of all persuasions strenuously criticize, condemn, and reject each other. In this respect they are one and the same. They're alike in their proud and hostile exclusive feelings. They're alike in mistaking their own religion's finite forms for the infinite essence. And they're alike in their mutual misunderstanding of each other's forms. These similarities are far greater than the differences between their respective doctrines, rituals, and practices.

Fundamentalist dogmatism leads to the perversion of religion. Instead of the shining card everyone seeks to win the hand of life, fundamentalists degrade religion from an ace to a deuce. They create closed systems of religion that are no more than a political gambit played on the table of war for the purpose of defeating their opponents. As a result of these abuses, fundamentalism forfeits religion's power to rescue and transform.

I believe it isn't necessary for religions to become closed systems. Open religions use and honor revealed forms and rituals—often the same ones closed religions use—but they use these forms as the means to an end. And that end is

the Divine essence. Open religions don't mistake the means for the end. They reach the essence itself. Hence, open religions aren't afraid to recognize the validity of other religions. They know that the Divine they reach is the same essence reached by masters and seekers using the different forms of other cultures.

For the first time, open religions are now a possibility in many places on earth. This is the nascent reality of the tours and residence of Eastern spiritual teachers in the West and of Western seekers in India, the Middle East, and the Far East. It is the result of numerous and widely selling books about the world's great religions and mystical teachings in bookstores in every mainstream shopping mall. Information and schedules of events are readily available on the Internet. Retreat facilities have sprung up by the hundreds, and all religions, including mystical orders, are represented in the world's major cities.

The essence of mysticism, regardless of its specific religious affiliation, is unity with the Infinite. Such unity is the real way toward peace. Although religion has failed to bring about universal peace, mysticism has the potential to do so.

## **Law**

The shortcomings of law as a means to peace are similar to those of religion, imperial order, and ideological unity. Historically, law has had a prominent role in religious or theocratic societies. Such laws include the Jewish Halakhah, the Islamic Shariah, and the Hindu Laws of Manu. The Shariah, for instance, is based on the Qur'an and spells out for Muslims what religious observances must be followed, strict codes for social conduct, and the consequences of not adhering to these rules. In this way, the legal framework is intended to unify all Muslims. However, it has not brought about lasting peace.

Instead, disagreement has arisen between various sects with divergent interpretations of the laws. The violent conflict between Shi'a and Sunni Muslims is one result of this.

Law obviously also figures in secular belief systems and political empires. Today, international—some would say “imperial”—law largely reflects the material interests and cultural values of the dominant Western industrial nations. But international law has made some strides toward world peace. It is embodied in some international treaties and agreements, and is adjudicated in international courts and the United Nations. The economic agreements among the Group of 8 (G8) nations and the North American trade bloc form part of this framework. Financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank form another part. Amidst these structures, however, a blaze of ethnic and national fragmentation has erupted. We have witnessed the decomposition of the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia. Perhaps in the future we will see the same in Canada, Italy, Britain, India, China, and the United States. In one-sided United Nations support for military actions in Central Asia and the Middle East, minus responses to foreign attacks on Somalia and Lebanon—and in international banking actions that benefit the bankers and multinational corporations—the so-called New World Order of international law resembles former hegemonies straining to maintain dominance in a world seething with change: The Spanish in the Americas and the European Netherlands, Napoleon in Europe, the British in India, the Soviets in Eastern Europe, and other hegemonies behaved with similar double standards..



## **A SPIRITUAL STRATEGY FOR PEACE**

The spiritual activist strategy for peace is fundamentally different from the strategies of unity, religion, and law just discussed. It is not a dogma or a set of rules. It is not something that can be legislated. Rather, it is cultivated within the human spirit. It is the strategy of spiritual growth. As such, it is deeply personal, yet at the same time has worldwide ramifications.

This strategy is founded on the conviction that Divine, peaceful, and creative energy is already present in every human heart. Spirituality starts from there—within the individual, at our very essence. Whatever religion we practice, or if we have no religious affiliation at all, makes no difference. In this way, the spiritual strategy for peace is a unifying approach.

This strategy is also notable for its diversity. The Divine heart manifests in people at all levels of spiritual maturity. For this reason, a wide range of lifestyles and occupations are appropriate for different people. Spiritual activists from all walks of life are drawn to different tracks and missions that reflect their interests. This is natural, and it is very healthy for humanity.

Emerging out of this diversity, I envision a spiritual revolution taking place. As they do spiritual work and come to realize the Divine unity and love connecting them, people from different paths and at different stages of development will begin to grow society as a worldwide organic formation that is an outer reflection of their inner peace. This may take lifetimes. The important thing is that it will be accomplished without coercion and yet with great diversity of culture.

An organic world unity based on growing good character in millions of different individuals is likely to be catalyzed by inspiring, mature characters. Some of these enlightened beings may be hidden, while others may play public

roles. If we look to the past, we see that the creative organizing force of religious transformation was funneled into society through powerful teachers, such as Buddha, Moses, Confucius, Jesus, and Muhammad. At the same time, transformation was also fostered gently and discreetly by invisible, hidden, or unknown characters. Mystic Judaism's tradition of the *lamed vav tzadikim*, the thirty-six just persons on whom the world's existence depends, refers to such beings. By their very nature, few of them can be named. However, now and then, they manifest, then disappear, in the desert or mountains, or even in cities. Or they may live stable, ordinary lives without being noticed, let alone heralded. In fact, by certain accounts, some may not even know they're among this group.

Hermitages, retreats, abbeys, and *khanaqahs* are not impotent just because they are inconspicuous. The spiritual consciousness of saints and prophets, recluses and nuns living in these secluded places resonates with the creative, peaceful nature of millions of other human beings. It is spiritual character and awareness—not knowledge, power, organizations, legal structures, or commercial or political empires—that will bring us whatever measure of peaceful unity we will ever enjoy through these or any other institutional or cultural forms.

### **A Shift in Consciousness**

The crushing effects of technification and the government leviathan found in our world today discourage our powers of action. They obscure our sense of identity and lead us to surrender responsibility for our own inner growth. In the past few decades, biotechnology and telecommunications have intensified the trend begun by the industrial revolution, causing us to look even

more outside ourselves for fulfillment. The more we depend on technology and call for government expansion, the more we lose the sense of who we really are. Our possibilities for personal growth shrink.

Technification reinforces the state's intrusion into our private lives to regulate our relationships, communications, and finances. Hypertrophy of the government leads to atrophy of the individuals. The bigger the state, the smaller the individual. The greater the technology, the less one looks inward for peace. Individuals are complicit in this. They give up more and more responsibility and initiative to government and technology.

The cure for hypertrophied government and technology is spiritual revolution. As spiritual activists, we need to revolve—that is, to turn inward. The revolution of spirituality requires a paradigm shift in consciousness. This is possible on all levels of human existence, both personal and social.

Within each individual, this shift is marked by a yearning for growth. We have the sense, “I myself could be transformed.” It is eminently possible, I believe, for us to tap into and release the peace that exists in the depths of the heart. This can be accomplished using methods that deal with our outer psychological and cultural layers, with egoism and desire. These layers cover and envelop the heart, obscuring the peace within. They need to be pierced or removed before we can see the light of blessedness and peace shine through.

As this shift in consciousness gathers momentum, it lends support to the possibility of broader social transformation and global reform. At present, we find two differing perspectives on the future. On the one hand, we hear some environmentalists and demographers painting a dark and pessimistic picture. They point out that the world's population will have doubled again by 2050 and that global warming will bring famines, mass starvation, and pandemics. On the

other hand, we have the overly optimistic view of some technocrats. They predict that by 2050 we will simply be able to push a button and everything will open up.

Spiritual consciousness provides an alternative to these opposing views. It accepts neither the darkness and despair of the former, nor the facile optimism of the latter. Instead, spirituality places the focus for change on the inner world. Yet it does so without creating a dichotomy between the inner and outer worlds.

### **Spiritual Ecology**

A spiritual approach to peace that incorporates both the inner and outer worlds logically fosters a sense of connectedness with nature. We are reflections of nature, and nature is a reflection of us. You know, as I like to point out, priests, monastics, and religious hermits may have been accused of many things, but no one has ever pointed a finger at them for killing whales or dolphins, conducting medical experiments on dogs and rabbits, or strip mining for the abbey!

Why are many people on the spiritual path sympathetic with nature? Because they understand that their own bodies are part of nature. More radically, they understand that nature is their body. All of nature is the body of each of us. Unified consciousness reveals this. It provides an essential sense of ecological connectedness, a vision of order and balance and harmonious interaction between humanity and nature.

### **The Revolution Starts with the Self**

Where does the spiritual transformation about which I'm speaking begin? It begins with the individual, not with humanity. You might imagine that to be a very small and insignificant step in light of the lack of peace in this world. But when a shift in consciousness happens within individuals, that shift is immediately reflected in the outer world.

In fact, those who say they are out to save humanity often end up violating humanity. Even if they have the best of intentions, they go about it by pushing their own agenda on others and thus compound the problem rather than providing a solution.

We have to start by saving that part of humanity over which we have the most control. And that is our own selves. By working on my own personal character, I acknowledge that humanity is worth working to perfect. In this way I honor humanity.

This emphasis on beginning with the personal is found in various spiritual traditions. Confucians and Taoists, for example, believe peace in the world is predicated on prior establishment of peace and harmony in the nation, families, and—first of all—in the individual's heart. Here are Confucius' words:

If there is righteousness in the heart, there will be beauty in the character.  
 If there is beauty in the character, there will be harmony in the home.  
 If there is harmony in the home, there will be order in the nation.  
 If there is order in the nation, there will be peace in the world.<sup>1</sup>

Lao Tzu asserted that *li* and *teh*—roughly corresponding in English to “action in accordance with the heart”—establish harmony in the individual, the home, the village, and the country.<sup>2</sup> The same principle is seen in the Islamic

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<sup>1</sup> Confucius, *The Analects* (New York: Macmillan, 1938), quoted in Houston Smith, *The World's Religions* (San Francisco: Harper, 1991), p. 174.f.

<sup>2</sup>

tradition of inner *jihad*, which refers to spiritual struggle with oneself. By battling the different faces of ego, one comes to know oneself and one's Lord.

### **SELF-KNOWLEDGE, SELF-GOVERNMENT, AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

Focusing on the human spirit in a personal way is a strategy that allows us to recover self-governance through self-knowledge. We begin with self-knowledge, which is the essence of spiritual growth, and we move toward self-governance, which becomes the outer measure of that growth.

Self-knowledge and self-governance enable our inner psychic currents to form a harmonious unity or whole. Peace is both the purpose and the result of inner wholeness. What I am speaking of is wholeness in its ancient sense, as healing.

#### **Becoming Whole**

In the West, the dominant inner current is that of the mind. Even in the East, the rational mind is becoming preponderant, manifesting as rationalism, secularism, and technification. This is okay. The mind is valuable. There is no point in denigrating our mental abilities for the sake of spiritual work.

The purpose of spiritual work is to harmonize rather than to block, stunt, or repress the mind. We harmonize the mind with the heart. Within our inner stream of consciousness, we unify the current of the mind with the current of the heart. We observe all these currents and honor the whole to which they belong.

Sometimes I hear people insisting that they want to transcend their minds. They think that is the route to divinity. But we can't transcend the mind by

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Lao Tzu, *The Way of Life [Tao Teh Ching]*, trans. R. B. Blakney (New York: Signet, 2001), verse 54, p. 107.

denying it. In fact, we can't transcend anything we do not first possess. At times the mind may seem to possess us, but rarely do we have control over it without first putting in a concerted effort to master it.

So we learn things, and we develop our mind. We control and use it. We discover its powers and limits. We become able to turn it on and off when appropriate. This is the way to transcend the mind—by accepting it, activating it, and developing it to its utmost limits.

As we push the mind to its limits, we also begin to discover its boundaries. At the same time, we discover the boundlessness of the heart. Then the mind can function harmoniously in its proper place in the field of consciousness: within the boundlessness of the heart. On an individual level, we realize our wholeness.

Peace is a sign that, in the process of what we are doing and who we are being, we are on the right road—we are healing—because contentment is growing in our lives, in the midst of all our activities.

### **The Process of Emptying**

Becoming peaceful is a process of emptying. What becomes empty? Our overly active mind. This doesn't mean we no longer have the ability to think. As we just discussed, the mind plays an extremely valuable function. But it can do this best when we're no longer ruled by unnecessary, discontent, warring thoughts. This kind of emptiness actually lends greater clarity to the thinking process. This clarity is the hallmark of true self-knowledge.

Enlightenment is not a matter of thinking. However, only those who have mastered thinking can know this. Just as only the rich know that money isn't everything, only a sophisticated mind knows thinking isn't the ultimate level of being. It isn't the true source when it comes to inner bliss and fulfillment,

interpersonal connections, or even understanding. Once we have experienced the powers of the mind to their utmost limit, we know better than to look to the mind for enlightenment. Then, also, we can't be seduced by scientism into neglecting prayer, service, and love.

As long as mental activity dominates the stage of consciousness, peace is impossible. When we allow ourselves to be dominated by our mental activity, we are at the mercy of the objects of our thoughts and desires. Over and over, we act intentionally for certain results. Yet in the end, we may or may not get what we want. We may want to live in a sane and peaceful world, to see an end to armed conflict and divisiveness between peoples. And we may strive to do everything under our power toward that goal. Nevertheless, in any given situation, there is no way to know for certain what the outcome will be. We'll win some battles and we'll lose others. That's inevitable. If we remain firmly attached to the good and beautiful results as we conceive them, peace is bound to elude us. In this way, resisting reality leads to inner conflict and suffering.

Peace comes when we make the effort to empty our minds of these nagging desires, and instead accept reality. We surrender to the grace of the moment, recognizing there are some things we simply can't change.

This doesn't mean we must become passive, however. As spiritual activists, we still can act strongly for peaceful and loving results. We can work toward our vision of world peace through whatever opportunities present themselves. The key is to act for peace and love without being attached to the results. This involves surrender with full mindfulness. It involves emptying ourselves so we can fully embody peacefulness.



We can't expect peace to follow automatically from our physical presence. Our full consciousness must be involved and harmonized. If we are spiritually absent, we are likely to be fearful or distracted or regretful when we don't see things going our way. Emptying means letting go of these feelings along with our attachment desired results. When we act from our highest inner state—from full mindfulness and loving kindness—we have done our best.

I have found the use of affirmations helpful in this process of emptying. Affirmations are statements that assert the existence of high qualities, visions, and actions. We conceive of the highest position we can take in a situation, and then we affirm it. This may take the form of a definite, well-defined action or it may be a more generalized inner stance. For example, you might affirm, "I will engage in open-minding listening before I speak during the meeting this morning" or "I am inwardly connected with all people who wish to be a force of peace in this world" or "I offer my service to help those who need it." With the power of affirmation propelling your actions, you become a guided missile of peace. Your habitual, nonfunctional beliefs are exploded.

### **The Will to Grow**

Fear and anxiety are mental disturbances that block our self-knowledge and our experience of peace. As long as we are dominated by these emotions, we will contaminate everyone we meet. And we will act destructively toward the planet. Gandhi emphasized that peacemakers cannot be ruled by fear. It is impossible to create peace out of fear. The only result is more and greater fear.

However, fear and anxiety can be overcome. To do so, we have to realize these emotions are caused by our beliefs. The key is to uncover our

innermost core of beliefs and examine how they conspire to cause fear and anxiety.

In fact, we should learn to recognize all the different currents flowing within our field of consciousness. If we just look on the surface, we see all the various thoughts and emotions coloring our experience of reality on a moment-to-moment basis. If we look deeper, we come upon the level of core beliefs. We can actually witness them while they are occurring. In this way, we experience every part of who we are. Once we have become familiar with this inner landscape, we can begin to organize and direct these currents more harmoniously.

This is a process of self-knowledge we have to do for ourselves. Without it, we are blind, we are not spiritual. With it, we can orchestrate an internal balance. This harmony doesn't allow domination by any single part or fragment. We may have major themes or tendencies, but we don't allow those to repress or dissociate other healthy aspects of ourselves. Instead of letting them split off as psychic fragments, we remain aware of them: If deference to others is a major tendency in our personality structure, self-knowledge allows us to notice insights and impulses that arise for us to take the initiative—or even take charge of someone else, say someone abusing us, or who is paralyzed with fear in a dangerous situation. Conscious recognition of the need or impulse for us to take charge is the opposite of repression. This awareness is also precisely what prevents repressed subconscious aggressiveness from turning us, later, into a ferocious Mr. Hyde—disassociated from our usual personality as deferential Dr. Jekyll. The effort to be aware of all our inner processes is the spiritual work we do for the sake of transformation.

We have the power to decide how we want to grow spiritually and politically. The specific choices and desires we cultivate, both inwardly and in our outer life, are what determine the kind of person we will become. We can choose to cultivate the qualities of generosity, kindness, or empathy; we can choose to become knowledgeable about health care, the environment, education. The choices are endless.

For the spiritual activist engaged in this process, humility is essential. Humility allows us to see clearly and avoid *I*-identification; that is, a sense of self based on any qualities or objects regarded as “me” or “mine.” When we recognize our own divinity, humility flows automatically. And if we haven't yet recognized our perfect nature, knowing that our state and condition are imperfect makes us humble. But we have to study and come to know these imperfections. If we avoid knowing them, then from time to time a shocking setback may sneak up on us and force us to undertake an agonizing reappraisal.

In this manner, the spiritual activist cultivates self-knowledge as a constant and basic condition for self-governance.

### **Relationships on the Path**

How do spiritual activists relate to other people on the path?

Witnessing and harmonizing the streams of consciousness in our own mind make it easier to harmonize with another person's streams of consciousness. The process of harmonizing within is essentially the same as the process of harmonizing between two or more people. Each person has a unique pattern of internal psychic energy, and spiritual unity in relationship depends on each of us honoring the other's singularity. Only if we acknowledge and honor each

other's uniqueness can our relationships be alive. Only in this way can they be conducive to everyone's growth.