

# Six Billion Paths to Peace



We live in an interconnected world.

The actions of people around us impact us everyday. In the same way, our actions impact those we live near, shop with, drive next to and work with. On a global level, what we do on one continent impacts others. What happens to one species, affects others.

As humans our lives are linked by stories that connect to each other. We have experiences and histories that are individual and idiosyncratic, but there is a shared essence. Regardless of our differences, we are all impacted by birth, death, illness, aging, and a desire for happiness.

6 Billion Paths to Peace is an effort to inspire people to focus on our interconnectedness and reflect upon the individual contributions that each of us are making to a more harmonious world.

It is easy to feel overwhelmed or hopeless by the suffering, violence and war going on in our world. The antidote is to take action and notice that there is much you can do to bring about a more harmonious world.

Each of us has a choice. You can turn away and ignore the challenges. You can react to challenges with anger and frustration. Or you can approach challenges with an attitude of service. Choosing to see the world from the perspective of service creates the possibility of great joy and peace.

Like a ripple in the water, each tiny act of peace reverberates out into the world expanding the experience of peace for all of us.

- A grandfather and war veteran sits with his grandson telling him stories about his life, and offers a perspective that life is a precious, precious thing.
- At the security line in the airport, a person hands a tray to the person in back of them. The next person follows their lead.
- An employee decides to start wiping down the counter top in her college's bathroom each morning. By the end of the year, it's a practice almost all employees share.
- Two people talk about creating an international day of peace, years later more than 800 events in 170 countries are held to bring attention to the power of peace worldwide.

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6 Billion Paths to Peace represents the idea that it is possible to inspire new reverberations of peace if we each step up and investigate our daily actions and make a commitment to offer our unique contributions to the world. There are a million ways to walk towards peace.

Our motto: What's Yours? Invites people to contemplate how they are going to contribute to peace. There are a million ways to serve and more than 6 billion ways to walk towards a more peaceful global community. We want to know: What's Yours?

*A project of the Shinnyo-en Foundation.*



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Below is a list of reflection questions, followed by possible acts of service or practices that we invite you to commit to, helping to make the world a more peaceful place for all of us.

## Creating Harmony within Yourself

Increase your sense of peace by engaging in service in a way that expresses your deepest values. Reflecting on the connections between visible action and invisible beliefs, attitudes, values and tendencies will help you see how these connections can either result in greater harmony and joy, or lead to internal conflict, burnout and exhaustion.

*What are a few of your core values? In what ways are you living them out right now?  
When have your values and actions felt in sync? When have they felt out of sync?*

### Possible actions and practices:

- Take a minute to notice what has made you peaceful today. Pass it on to someone else.
- Reflect on what you learned about serving others, write your Service Story and submit it at [www.sef.org](http://www.sef.org).
- Post an image or quote about harmony in your working or living space to remind you of the universal value of peace.

## Creating Harmony with Others

Investigate your relationships with others and notice how a perspective of service can bring about greater harmony. Harmony between individuals is critical to global peace.

*What relationships feel like they are in harmony?  
Where do you sense uneasiness in your relationships?  
What type of gesture might you initiate to either increase the harmony or decrease the uneasiness?*

### Possible actions and practices:

- Express gratitude to someone you appreciate.
- Reach out to someone new, or who you don't know very well.
- Mend a challenging relationship by reaching out, apologizing or appreciating someone.

## Harmony Among Groups and Nations

Perhaps the most complex level on which to foster global harmony is the organizational and institutional. Engage with others to reflect on commonalities as humans and discuss possible partnerships that bring about greater global harmony through service.

*What clubs, groups or communities are you part of?  
What is one value shared by two or more of these groups?  
Have you ever been a catalyst to bringing greater harmony between diverse groups?*

### Possible actions and practices:

- Suspend your judgment and listen to the history or current happenings of an organization or person from a country that you don't know well.
- Find a way to remind people in different groups that they share core values.
- Initiate or facilitate a conversation with a diverse group of people to share stories that matter.

## Contemplate Your Own Path to Peace

*In your effort to help others, what thoughts or actions drain you?  
How might you change your thoughts or actions so they are less draining?  
When have you done things for others in a way that gave you energy and joy?*

### Possible actions and practices:

- Commit to a daily act of service (regardless of how small).