

## Love and Compassion Are Necessities, Not Luxuries

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"Love and Compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them humanity cannot survive." As I reflect on everything that is going on in the world, this quote from the Dalai Lama becomes more important.

Everyone wishes for peace and love during times of turmoil. When we are comfortable, we tend to forget that we are living in an imperfect, unfair world. We have become desensitized to the struggles of others and overly focused on ourselves. When we are desensitized to the struggles of others it is easy to dismiss or minimize their cry out for help.

It is becoming more evident that we all perceive reality differently. We perceive reality based on our personal experience. Humanities division comes from the differences in our perceptions of reality and our inability to empathize with others. However, this should not be the case. Unity is not uniformity; we don't have to think the same, we do not have to perceive reality the same, but we do have to listen to everyone's experience.

We can combat our division by practicing inclusive dialogue. This means that we normalize dialogue pertaining to our despair just as we normalize sharing our joys. Sharing our genuine pain and feeling heard and understood is the first step in healing. Unfortunately, the truth can be uncomfortable. The evident division in the world has taken us out of our comfort zone and it has encouraged uncomfortable dialogue. This dialogue has revealed differences in our human experiences which encourages growth. We all must grow to collectively achieve our goal of peace. We grow by continually educating ourselves, seeing from others' viewpoints and seeing from God's viewpoint. We also grow by steering away from groupthink and seeking our individual responsibility in creating a peaceful world.

We often forget that as imperfect beings, we are just as likely to do evil deeds as we are of doing good deeds. We often forget that we are all inherently biased because of our environment or experiences. Therefore, inclusive dialogue is necessary to combat our bias and ignite our love and compassion for humanity. Let's get out of our comfort zone, go beyond the normal small talk and practice inclusive dialogue where we genuinely express our hearts, experiences and desire for change. Let's remember that one person's experience does not represent the whole. Let's focus on individual responsibility to humanity. Let's persevere until we reach our unified goal for peace.

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Editor's Note: This guest article is part of a new initiative by WFWP Logic of Love News to feature the voices of African American women and give them a platform to share their thoughts and feelings about the growing awareness of racial injustice and what is needed to work towards peace and reconciliation.