

# 5 KEYS TO INNER PEACE

## INSPIRED BY GREAT PEACEMAKERS



In the midst of our hectic day-to-day lives, most of us would like to have a bit more inner peace. The difficulty is, we aren't sure how to go about getting it. We might wonder: What makes up inner peace? What specific steps can I take to increase it?

To answer such questions, who better to turn to than those who have already reflected deeply on them, who have lived lives of peace, and whose wisdom can guide us along the way?

After more than five years studying luminaries such as Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa, and the Dalai Lama while writing our book, *Great Peacemakers*, we had the good fortune of benefiting from their insights about inner peace.

Of course, not everyone has five years to do this kind of study. So, to save you time and effort, we have distilled this knowledge and selected five important keys to inner peace inspired by these visionaries. We are happy to share these keys with you here, along with questions to help you apply them to your own life.

## BALANCE



Without balance, we can feel like a boat without a rudder, easily toppled or thrown off course in any wind. But, our stability is strengthened when we balance various aspects of our lives: work and home, social time and private time, and our mental, physical, and spiritual selves.

Different things create balance for different people. For you, it might be exercise or socializing. Or, it might be walks in nature or a creative or spiritual pursuit. Find what works for you and let yourself take a break to do it. As writer Whitney Johnson points out, "Only after a break can you have a breakthrough."

Peacemakers such as Mother Teresa, Mahatma Gandhi, and the Dalai Lama valued balance. Amid their outward social service in the world, they also made time to replenish their inner reserves through prayer, silence, or meditation. This helped them continue their work long-term, benefiting countless people.

One thing that helps me feel balanced is: \_\_\_\_\_

## SIMPLICITY



Many of us have lives that are overcrowded and overly complex. To free up mental "space," reduce stress, and boost inner peace, it's helpful to simplify.

Simplifying involves being selective about which activities you choose to commit to and how you use your life energy, thereby reducing mental and physical "clutter."

Releasing activities and possessions that no longer serve you brings greater serenity and frees up time and space for what really does matter to you.

As Vietnamese monk Thich Nhat Hahn realized, "The practice of living simply has many advantages: when you are no longer running after possessions, you need less money and can afford to work less. You have more time to do things that are meaningful and enjoyable."

One way I could simplify my life is: \_\_\_\_\_

## PRESENCE



Presence means being fully in the “here and now” instead of mentally being somewhere else, stuck in the past, or anticipating the future.

By reducing your distractions and interruptions, you can enjoy where you are and what you are doing right now. You might find yourself viewing your surroundings with a renewed sense of

wonder and becoming so pleasantly absorbed in it that time seems to vanish.

Children and animals are masters of presence, marveling at the wonders of the world around them and delighting in the joys of simply being alive. We all have this capacity and would do well to revive it. After all, our ideal future might never arrive. This moment is the only one we truly have. It is a gift, a present.

As Henry David Thoreau declared, “I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately... and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived.”

One time I feel fully present is: \_\_\_\_\_

## GRATITUDE



Practicing gratitude is a powerful way to put things into a brighter, more positive light. An instant sense of well-being arises by appreciating the blessings in your life—even little things such as a comfortable bed or clean drinking water.

Often, having “an attitude of gratitude” can make all the difference between feeling miserable or feeling peaceful. Ways to do this include starting a gratitude journal to list things you are grateful for each day; beginning or ending each day thinking of these things; or writing a thank you note to the universe.

As Mother Teresa said while tending the poor and dying in India, “The miracle is not that we do this work, but that we are happy to do it.”

One thing I am grateful for right now is: \_\_\_\_\_

## CONTENTMENT



Inner peace is not about feeling overjoyed every single minute. Rather, it is about being content—feeling whole and complete within yourself, regardless of what you have or don't have, or what is going on around you.

Contentment rises within us as we release perfectionism. To do this, it helps to accept yourself the way you are now and make peace with your situation as it is (even while you work toward making improvements or achieving future goals). Remember, it is important to be a “human being,” not just a “human doing.” Enjoy the journey of life, not just the destination.

As Archbishop Desmond Tutu said, “Peace is not a goal to be reached, but a way of life to be lived.”

One thing that helps me feel content is: \_\_\_\_\_

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We hope you find these 5 keys—balance, simplicity, presence, gratitude, and contentment—to be helpful in unlocking greater inner peace in your life. While these are important keys to inner peace, they are not the *only* keys and we urge you to explore others that resonate with you.

Beyond inner peace, there are other types of peace such as interpersonal, societal, interspecies, etc. To continue exploring, we invite you to read our book, [Great Peacemakers](#), and take our upcoming e-course/online retreat that reveals life-changing insights of great peacemakers. It is in development now, and we will notify you when it's ready.

Meanwhile, feel free to share your inner peace quiz results with your family and friends and invite them to take the quiz, too. Helping others to reflect on these topics is one small way to “increase the peace” in their lives—and our world.

Thank you!

In Peace,  
Ken Beller & Heather Chase

