



Peace  
Quotes

Words of Peace, Justice & Nonviolence

## **Mahatma Gandhi**

When I despair, I remember that all through history the way of truth and love has always won. There have been tyrants and murderers and for a time they seem invincible but in the end, they always fall – think of it, ALWAYS!

I claim to be no more than an average person with less than average ability. I have not the shadow of doubt that any man or woman can achieve what I have, if he or she would make the same effort and cultivate the same hope and faith.

It is better to be violent, if there is violence in our hearts, than to put on the cloak of nonviolence to cover impotence.

It is unwise to be too sure of one's own wisdom. It is healthy to be reminded that the strongest might weaken and the wisest might err.

One needs to be slow to form convictions, but once formed they must be defended against the heaviest odds.

Nonviolence which is a quality of the heart, cannot come by an appeal to the brain.

We must be the change we wish to see in the world.

## Thich Nhat Hanh

If in our daily life we can smile, if we can be peaceful and happy, not only we, but everyone will profit from it. This is the most basic kind of peace work.

In April, we cannot see sunflowers in France, so we might say the sunflowers do not exist. But the local farmers have already planted thousands of seeds, and when they look at the bare hills, they may be able to see the sunflowers already. The sunflowers are there. They lack only the conditions of sun, heat, rain and July. Just because we cannot see them does not mean that they do not exist.

The real miracle is not to walk either on water or in thin air, but to walk on earth.

Smiling is very important. If we are not able to smile, then the world will not have peace. It is not by going out for a demonstration against nuclear missiles that we can bring about peace. It is with our capacity of smiling, breathing, and being peace that we can make peace.

## MARTIN LUTHER KING

The first question which the priest and the Levite asked [on the Jericho Road] was: 'If I stop to help this man, what will happen to me?' But...the good Samaritan reversed the question: 'If I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to him?'

"Through violence you may murder a murderer, but you can't murder murder.  
Through violence you may murder a liar, but you can't establish truth.  
Through violence you may murder a hater, but you can't murder hate.  
Darkness cannot put out darkness. Only light can do that...  
Difficult and painful as it is, we must walk on in the days ahead with an audacious faith in the future. When our days become dreary with low-hovering clouds of despair, and when our nights become darker than a thousand midnights, let us remember that there is a creative force in this universe, working to pull down the gigantic mountains of evil, a power that is able to make a way out of no way and transform dark yesterdays into bright tomorrows. Let us realize the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice."

Martin Luther King, "Where do we go from here?", August 1967

I'd like someone to mention the day that Martin Luther King tried to give his life serving others. I'd like somebody to say that day, that Martin Luther King tried to love somebody. I want you to say that day, that I tried to be right on the war question. I want you to be able to say that day, that I did try to feed the hungry . . . I want you to say that I tried to love and serve humanity. Yes, if you want to say that I was a drum major, say that I was a drum major

for justice; say that I was a drum major for peace; I was a drum major for righteousness . . .  
I want to leave a committed life behind.

The ultimate measure of a person is not where one stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where one stands in times of challenge and controversy.

The means by which we live have outdistanced the ends for which we live. Our scientific power has outrun our spiritual power. We have guided missiles and misguided men.

I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. That is why right, temporarily defeated, is stronger than evil triumphant.

Nonviolence means avoiding not only external physical violence but also internal violence of spirit. You not only refuse to shoot a man, but you refuse to hate him.

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny.

Peace is not merely a distant goal that we seek, but a means by which we arrive at that goal.

One day we shall win freedom, but not only for ourselves. We shall so appeal to your heart and conscience that we shall win you in the process, and our victory will be a double victory.

If you succumb to the temptation of using violence in the struggle, unborn generations will be the recipients of a long and desolate night of bitterness, and your chief legacy to the future will be an endless reign of meaningless chaos.

I plan to stand by nonviolence, because I have found it to be a philosophy of life that regulates not only my dealings in the struggle for racial justice, but also my dealings with people, and with my own self.

"As you press on for justice, be sure to move with dignity and discipline, using only the weapon of love. Let no man pull you so low as to hate him.

Always avoid violence. If you succumb to the temptation of using violence in your struggle, unborn generations will be the recipients of a long and desolate night of bitterness, and your chief legacy to the future will be an endless reign of meaningless chaos."

A man who won't die for something is not fit to live.

## **Albert Einstein**

The pioneers of a warless world are the young men (and women) who refuse military service.

I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones.

Any intelligent fool can make things bigger, more complex, and more violent. It takes a touch of genius -- and a lot of courage -- to move in the opposite direction.

We must be prepared to make heroic sacrifices for the cause of peace that we make ungrudgingly for the cause of war. There is no task that is more important or closer to my heart.

Out of clutter, find simplicity. From discord, find harmony. In the middle of difficulty, lies opportunity.

## Miscellaneous Quotes

"War is obsolete.  
We are not here to fight something or tear something down;  
We are here to be the example of what is possible.  
Any sane individual will tell you that violence is ... not the way..."

--Buckminster Fuller

"Nonviolence is really tough. You don't practice nonviolence at conferences; you practice it on picket-lines."

-- Cesar Chavez

"War will exist until that distant day when the conscientious objector enjoys the same reputation and prestige that the warrior does today."

--John F. Kennedy

"Behind the ostensible government sits enthroned an invisible government owing no allegiance and acknowledging no responsibility to the people.  
To destroy this invisible government, to befoul the unholy alliance between corrupt business and corrupt politics is the first task of the statesmanship of the day."

--Theodore Roosevelt, April 19, 1906

"So instead of loving what you think is peace, love other [people] and love God above all. And instead of hating the people you think are warmakers, hate the appetites and the disorder in your own soul, which are the causes of war. If you love peace, then hate injustice, hate tyranny, hate greed - but hate these things in yourself, not in another."

- Thomas Merton, from "New Seeds of Contemplation"

I like to believe that people in the long run are going to do more to promote peace than our governments. Indeed, I think that the people want peace so much that one of these days governments had better get out of the way and let them have it.

Dwight D. Eisenhower

"My humanity is bound up in yours, for we can only be human together."

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Archbishop Desmond Tutu

"The best preparedness is the one that disarms the hostility of other nations and makes friends of them."

Helen Keller

"If there is light in the soul, there will be beauty in the person. If there is beauty in the person, there will be harmony in the house. If there is harmony in the house, there will be order in the nation. If there is order in the nation, there will be peace in the world."

Chinese Proverb

"Peace, in the sense of absence of war, is of little value to someone who is dying of hunger or cold. Peace can only last where human rights are respected, where people are fed, and where individuals and nations are free."

The 14th Dalai Lama

"Great ideas, it has been said, come into the world as gently as doves. Perhaps then, if we listen attentively, we shall hear amid the uproar of empires and nations, a faint flutter of wings, a gentle stirring of life and hope. Some will say that this hope lies in a nation; others in a person. I believe rather that it is awakened, revived, nourished by millions of solitary individuals whose deeds and works every day negate frontiers and the crudest implications of history. As a result, there shines forth fleetingly the ever-threatened truth that each and every person, on the foundation of his or her own sufferings and joys, builds for all."

Albert Camus, *The Artist and His Time*

"In the hearts of people today there is a deep longing for peace. When the true spirit of peace is thoroughly dominant, it becomes an inner experience with unlimited possibilities. Only when this really happens--when the spirit of peace awakens and takes possession of men's hearts, can humanity be saved from perishing."

Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965)

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"Peace is not the product of terror or fear. Peace is not the silence of cemeteries. Peace is not the silent result of violent repression. Peace is the generous, tranquil contribution of all to the good of all. Peace is dynamism. Peace is generosity. It is right and it is duty."

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Oscar Romero

"Peace comes from being able to contribute the best that we have, and all that we are, toward creating a world that supports everyone. But it is also securing the space for others to contribute the best that they have and all that they are."

Hafsat Abiola

Why is it so easy for us to be willing to pick up arms and risk our lives, and so difficult to put down those same weapons and still risk our lives - in the cause of life?

Ramzi Kysia, a young Muslim-American peace activist

The job of the peacemaker is to stop war, to purify the world, to get it saved from poverty and riches, to heal the sick, to comfort the sad, to wake up those who have not yet found God, to create joy and beauty wherever you go, to find God in everything and everyone.

Muriel Lester

"One is called to live nonviolently, even if the change one works for seems impossible. It may or may not be possible to turn the US around through nonviolent revolution. But one thing favors such an attempt: the total inability of violence to change anything for the better"

Daniel Berrigan

The God of life summons us to life; more, to be lifegivers, especially toward those who lie under the heel of the powers.

Daniel Berrigan

Sometime in your life, hope that you might see one starved man, the look on his face when the bread finally arrives. Hope that you might have baked it or bought or even kneaded it yourself. For that look on his face, for your meeting his eyes across a piece of bread, you might be willing to lose a lot, or suffer a lot, or die a little, even.

Daniel Berrigan

"We have assumed the name of peacemakers, but we have been, by and large, unwilling to pay any significant price. And because we want the peace with half a

heart and half a life and will, the war, of course, continues, because the waging of war, by its nature, is total—but the waging of peace, by our own cowardice, is partial. So a whole will and a whole heart and a whole national life bent toward war prevail over the mere desire for peace....

There is no peace because the making of peace is at least as costly as the making of war—at least as exigent, at least as disruptive, at least as liable to bring disgrace and prison and death in its wake."

Daniel Berrigan

Peace begins when the hungry are fed.

Anonymous

Anger is an acid that can do more harm to the vessel in which it stands than to anything on which it is poured.

Anonymous

Peace is the work of justice indirectly, in so far as justice removes the obstacles to peace; but it is the work of charity (love) directly, since charity, according to its very notion, causes peace.

Thomas Aquinas

When evil is allowed to compete with good, evil has an emotional populist appeal that wins out unless good men and women stand as a vanguard against abuse.

Hannah Arendt, 20th-century German political philosopher and author

The sad truth is that most evil is done by people who never make up their minds to be good or evil.

Hannah Arendt

Peace is not the product of a victory or a command. It has no finishing line, no final deadline, no fixed definition of achievement. Peace is a never-ending process, the work of many decisions.

Oscar Arias

That's all nonviolence is - organized love.

Joan Baez

The only thing that's been a worse flop than the organization of nonviolence has been the organization of violence.

Joan Baez

If it's natural to kill, how come men have to go into training to learn how?

Joan Baez

The point of nonviolence is to build a floor, a strong new floor, beneath which we can no longer sink. A platform which stands a few feet above napalm, torture, exploitation, poison gas, A and H bombs, the works. Give man a decent place to stand.

Joan Baez

There have been periods of history in which episodes of terrible violence occurred but for which the word violence was never used...Violence is shrouded in justifying myths that lend it moral legitimacy, and these myths for the most part kept people from recognizing the violence for what it was. The people who burned witches at the stake never for one moment thought of their act as violence; rather they thought of it as an act of divinely mandated righteousness. The same can be said of most of the violence we humans have ever committed.

Gil Bailie

The most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed.

Steve Biko

When you're finally up on the moon, looking back at the earth, all these differences and nationalistic traits are pretty well going to blend and you're going to get a concept that maybe this is really one world and why the hell can't we learn to live together like decent people?

Frank Borman

There is no time left for anything but to make peace work a dimension of our every waking activity.

Elise Boulding

We do not inherit the earth from our fathers. We borrow it from our children.

David Bower

We have grasped the mystery of the atom and rejected the Sermon on the Mount. Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants. We know more about war than we know about peace, more about killing that we know about living.

General Omar Bradley

When you give food to the poor, they call you a saint. When you ask why the poor have no food, they call you a communist.

Archbishop Helder Camara, Brazilian liberation theologian

We used to wonder where war lived, what it was that made it so vile. And now we realize that we know where it lives, that it is inside ourselves.

Albert Camus

Until we have the courage to recognize cruelty for what it is--whether its victim is human or animal--we cannot expect things to be much better in this world... We cannot have peace among men whose hearts delight in killing any living creature. By every act that glorifies or even tolerates such moronic delight in killing we set back the progress of humanity.

Rachel Carson

The love of one's country is a splendid thing. But why should love stop at the border?

Pablo Casals

Each person has inside a basic decency and goodness. If he listens to it and acts on it, he is giving a great deal of what the world needs most. It is not complicated but it takes courage. It takes courage for a person to listen to his own goodness and act on it.

Pablo Casals