

Activism from the Inside Out

By Roy Holman

At a time when recessions, depression, terrorism, oil spills, earthquakes, global warming, racism, and countless other crises of ego, economy, and environment call for our attention, focusing on self-healing hardly seems politically correct or for that matter enough to effect planetary healing.

Yet personal is global, and there is a healthy selfishness which heals the world from the inside out. As Gandhi taught, we can be the change by first healing ourselves, and then taking that sense of wholeness, clarity, and joy into our work of service or activism.

The considerable injustices, problems and challenges of our world are enough to feel righteously angry about—an emotion that fuels many activists. My human rights work in Guatemala was rich and purposeful, but my passion was triggered in part by an inner rage with roots far deeper than a reaction to the suffering around me. At some point I realized that anger begets anger and that to be an effective global citizen and true activist, I needed to tend my wounds from a painful childhood. At times this inner work was scarier than the danger I faced in Central America.

The world is simply a reflection of each of our consciousness, which creates the collective beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, and their global manifestations. One person can do a lot. But, those who first takes the time to know themselves, to heal wounds, to identify not with the ego but with the timeless soul, these individuals light and lift all those around.

The Inner Activist: Is That You?

Where do you fit on the scale of inner and outer activism?

- Are you the Inner Activist focused mostly on an inner path of healing?
- Are you the Outer Activist who focuses on serving others and healing the world?
- Are you neither of the above, but simply living your mundane life, not really looking within or utilizing your gifts in service to the world?
- Or, have you found a beautiful balance of inner and outer healing and activism?

Role Models

People in this fourth category can be our role models. Gandhi, a powerful activist meditated early each morning to tame his own demons, find inner peace, and thus love his enemy. While Gandhi was in prison, a man wrote to him asking how he could help

heal their country, to which Gandhi replied: “Do not burden yourself with the responsibility of emancipating the country. Emancipate yourself, this burden is good enough. Begin applying all principles to your life, considering that you are India. In this rests the salvation of your soul. In this rests the salvation of India.”

Martin Luther King, Jr. learned from Gandhi. Amma, the “Hugging Saint,” is another living example. She has worked tirelessly for the poor in her native India, assisting thousands. Yet her motherly embrace (she has hugged an estimated 25 million people around the world) has helped transform countless lives. Her very presence reflecting an inner state of joy and love are arguably more transformational than any physical work she does.

How to Start

Inner healing can take many forms. For some it is learning to breathe more deeply, or meditate, or simply ground deeply into the Earth. It may mean studying yoga or tai chi, or opening the heart and learning how to forgive. For some, it is learning to talk less and listen more. It may mean trusting and following our passion and sharing our gifts. It may mean getting help such as psychotherapy, and learning how to safely express our feelings. Inner healing may also lead us to being with other seekers in spiritual community. The Buddha called this *Sangha*—community of truth-seekers—and believed that this was the most important ingredient in healing.

We heal by taking a full and radical responsibility for our own thoughts, words, beliefs, actions, and emotions—our very life. We stop blaming and projecting, we diminish the ego, and we clear our mind. We learn how to safely express both our pain and our passion. We become a paradox: peaceful, compassionate, and accepting even as we take our fire and determination into our activism. We befriend the dark yet bring in the light. Our very presence heals and illuminates.

Taking It to the World

This world is awakening and shifting at an ever quickening pace, and as more of humanity rises, even more follows. When we combine the power of the awakened heart with sacred service work of the soul, trusting and following our unique passions, we greatly accelerate this global shift and the answers—be they economic, environmental, social, or political, will arise almost effortlessly from the enlightened mind.

This is where we are on Earth at this time, with children being born who are sometimes called “indigo” children. These “children” are really wise souls who are not part of the old left-brain energy of duality, but more aligned in right-brained unity consciousness. Our current President, Barack Obama, may be in this mold. He does not know how to divide into good or bad, right and wrong. He is part of the new energy of win—win, and while this pleases many around the world, this also frustrates many

from both the political right and left who are still clinging to the old fearful way of competition and power over.

Yet this is not about politics or one man. It is about humanity's shift in consciousness. If there ever was a time to face and heal our inner wounds and limiting shadows, it is NOW. Those of us who hold on to old energies of separation and duality will increasingly suffer, while those of us who join the upsurge in global awakening will find ever more light, guidance, and healing vibration in which to grow and assist this transformation. What a time to be alive, to shine bright, and be a guiding light on Earth.

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