



## **Power of Peace**

It is my wish that the spiritual power of peace will touch every person on this earth, radiating from a deep peace within our own minds, across political and religious barriers, across the barriers of ego and self-righteousness. Our first task as peacemakers is to clear away our internal conflicts caused by ignorance, anger, grasping, jealousy, and pride. With the guidance of a spiritual teacher, this purification of our own minds can teach us the very essence of peacemaking. We should seek an inner peace so pure, so stable, that we cannot be moved to anger by those who live and profit by war, or to self-grasping and fear by those who confront us with contempt and hatred.

Extraordinary patience is necessary to work toward world peace, and the source of that patience is inner peace. Such peace enables us to see clearly that war and suffering are outer reflections of the mind's poisons. The essential difference between peacemakers and those who wage war is that peacemakers have discipline and control over egotistical anger, grasping, jealousy and pride, whereas war makers, out of ignorance, cause these poisons to manifest in the world. If you truly understand this, you will never allow yourself to be defeated from within or without.

In Tibetan Buddhism, the peacock is a symbol for the bodhisattva, the awakened warrior who works for the enlightenment of all beings. A peacock is said to eat poisonous plants, but to transform the poison into the gorgeous colors of its feathers. It does not poison itself. In the same way, we who advocate world peace must not poison ourselves with anger. Regard with equanimity the powerful, worldly men who control the war machines. Do your best to convince them of the necessity of peace, but be constantly aware of your state of mind. If you become angry, pull back. If you are able to act without anger, perhaps you will penetrate the terrible delusion that perpetrates war and its hellish suffering.

From the clear space of your own inner peace, your compassion must expand to include all who are involved in war, both the soldiers—whose intention is to benefit but who instead cause suffering and death and thus are caught by the terrible karma of killing—and the civilians who are wounded, killed, or forced into exile as refugees. True compassion is aroused by suffering of every sort, by the suffering of every being; it is not tied to right or wrong, attachment or aversion.

The work of peace is a spiritual path in itself, a means to develop the perfect qualities of mind and to test them against urgent necessity, extreme suffering, and death. Do not be afraid to give it your time, energy, and support.

Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche (1930 – 2002)

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