

Gray Matters on Being Contagious

by Leslie A. Gray, LCMHC, RYT

If you could choose one thing to infect other people with, what would it be? I suppose that might vary depending on who we are thinking about infecting. Fair enough. We are certainly not without evil in this world. So, let's think about this more broadly for the sake of the conversation.

What does the world need? Peace? Love? Patience? Kindness? Quite possibly all of the above and then some. I don't think there is any one thing but rather a collection of traits and attributes that are truly necessary to create global harmony. If we each choose one thing to focus our energy on, one thing to intentionally radiate into the universe, how would it impact the world overall?

John Lennon asks us again and again to 'Imagine' a world where people are living life in peace and in the moment, doing so with generosity toward one another. Just imagining this world feels lovely, let alone living in it. So how do we get there?

One human at a time.

The contagion effect is evidenced in many ways such as 'paying it forward' at the tollbooth or drive-thru, paying for the person behind you; or stopping to help a stranger in distress. Maybe it is achieved by simply demonstrating common courtesies to one another like holding the door, making eye contact with the server as they take your order, or saying please and thank you. These all have the power to create a tiny ripple effect on the person in front of you which can impact the way they feel and how they then interact with others and so on. And of course, being rude, disrespectful, or generally uncouth can be equally powerful. The beauty of free-will is that humans get to decide hundreds of times throughout every single day of their life what kind of an impact they choose to have on the world around them through the interactions they have with others; be it split-second or long-term; with total strangers or members of their own inner tribe, and everything in between.

Let's use the example of holding the door, which we can easily view as a metaphor for a simple act of being thoughtful and momentarily generous with your time. It may seem like an insignificant gesture since it only takes seconds, but if every human 'held the door' for another person today alone, even if each act of kindness only took 5 seconds, collectively all those acts of kindness would add up to 1,267 years. That's a lot of kindness. I can't help but wonder what kind of an impact such a thing could have on the world energetically. Consider the power of an earthquake, felt for miles in all directions and how it makes people 'feel'; or the energy that is felt from a sonic boom. Energy is powerful and humans might not realize how much of it, good or bad, they exude with their behaviors, attitudes, and choices. And not just on how their energy impacts one another, but the impact on the environment and the earth as well.

In the words of Satish Kumar, "In India we always pronounce the word peace three times: shanti, shanti, shanti – peace, peace, peace. Why three times? Because peace has at least three dimensions: inner peace, social peace, and ecological peace – making peace with yourself, making peace with the world, and making peace with nature." A lively and vibrant man, Satish is a Peace Pilgrim, activist, and educator. Certainly, one of many who are on a mission to save the world; quite possibly from itself.

What do you currently infect others with? You are contagious. Be conscientious about your contagion of choice. You have the power to create a better world. Through this collaboration, energetically we can

eradicate hate because despite it all, I still believe that there is more good in the world than evil. We just have to be better about owning our part in this journey of life.

Radiate love. Speak with kindness. Exude hope. My mother used to say, "If you have nothing nice to say, say nothing." She lived by this rule and only spoke with kindness and love. What a world it would be if more humans committed to this.

The following is a Metta Meditation which, by design in its Buddhist origin, starts with one person and builds with each verse to become all-inclusive of every living thing: I, You, He, She, They, We. When you recite a Metta Meditation, you can feel the expansiveness of your own words and how it radiates your message energetically into the universe. I choose peace as my topic and like to expand it outward, then bring it all the way back home giving it a sense of completeness.

"I deserve peace. You deserve peace. He deserves peace. She deserves peace. They deserve peace. We deserve peace. They deserve peace. She deserves peace. He deserves peace. You deserve peace. I deserve peace."

What will you choose?

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