

I Hold the Power of Peace

FINDING YOUR PIECE IN PEACE

By Carol Daigneault

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ISBN 978-0-9828397-0-6

Editing by Teresa Piccari

Book Design by KAT Design

Art by Holly L. Smith (cover and page 31)

First Printing May 2011

Printed in the United States of America

NEW VIEW STUDIO

Rockport, ME 04856

www.IHoldthePowerofPeace.com

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It was September 12, 2001, the day after. The disbelief, uncertainty and sorrow over the terrorist attacks of the day before weighed heavily on everyone's shoulders. I decided to go for a walk to clear my mind.

At the time I lived in East Boothbay, Maine. Many U.S. citizens feared their city might be attacked next but I was not concerned. Our state's large geographic footprint and sparse million-plus population left me feeling safe. My focus was on how I could offer support to my fellow citizens. So, as I walked, I considered what I could do to help during this tumultuous time.

My route took me to a quiet street that bordered a beautiful stretch of oceanfront. Regardless of the season or weather, it was always a soothing and harmonious sight. Keeping a steady pace for almost an hour allowed my thoughts to drift and flow with the rhythm of the ocean beside me. Nearing the end of my journey I specifically asked myself, "What can I do to help during this time?"

Immediately, I received an answer in such a

clear and forceful way it stopped me in my tracks. The message was:

I Hold the Power of Peace

Instantly, I knew these words were directed to me personally. I also understood the collective nature of the message. Many were publicly calling for a military response and a possible invasion of Afghanistan loomed. The uncertainty of the situation was fueling aggressive reactions. The message *I Hold the Power of Peace* called for a shift in our collective thinking. Could people allow themselves a more neutral outlook, even briefly? Then perhaps, a less extreme course of action could be chosen.

My passion for over fifteen years had been the study of personal empowerment. A child of the '60s, I was raised by a liberal civil rights and peace-focused mother. This upbringing allowed me to think it entirely feasible that we could end the call to war by focusing on peace. When enough of us thought peace, believed in peace and ultimately felt peaceful, we would tip the balance for many

more to experience peace as well.

I did however, realize that my ideas were not embraced by mainstream America. Most people were feeling a deep fear and the need for revenge and retaliation was growing from that perspective. Even my husband, a seemingly non-aggressive person, was calling for military action.

My walk almost complete, I asked myself another question. “How can I share this concept?” In my mind’s eye, I saw a bumper sticker displaying the phrase *I Hold the Power of Peace*. This small project wouldn’t address the immediate situation but it could spread the message to others. Selecting my favorite deep indigo as a background color to surround white letters, I later had a stack of slender, shiny, rectangular stickers printed.

Initially, the precious jewels were passed out to friends and acquaintances. A few people took a half dozen to share. A rush of excitement would fill me whenever I spotted one boldly displayed on a vehicle around my town.

I often pursue ideas with little planning of the next step or any obvious conclusion. Usually I move forward on faith. The *Power of Peace* bumper

stickers were such an idea. Following my first heartfelt distribution, the stack that remained was stowed in a drawer.

My study of personal empowerment then continued with a renewed commitment. During this immersion I developed a much deeper appreciation for the value of personal peace.

New insights now compel me to spread the message of the *Power of Peace* more widely. We're in this together. We all play an important role in the realization of Peace on Earth. When more of us make it a personal priority to shift our negative feelings and beliefs, our transformed expression of peace will make a difference in the world.

So, I wholeheartedly share this message with you. It may not be a new idea but it is one that is important enough to be repeated.

May you understand, enjoy and *Hold the Power of Peace*.

The Message

You may be thinking that you are already a peaceful person and I trust that is the case. Your life goes relatively smoothly. There are occasional stresses but that is to be expected when living in a fast-paced world, right?

The type of peace I'm talking about is different. In Feng Shui it is taught, "As within, so without." This wisdom illuminates the lesson that circumstances of our outer, physical world reflect the condition of our inner being. Therefore, when there is peace within, there will be peace without. This peace without is reflected in the people and circumstances that make up the various layers of our lives.

Our personal influence ripples out like concentric circles to family, friends and colleagues. Expanding, the process continues as we impact neighbors, acquaintances and community. Ultimately, we influence and are influenced by everyone on Earth. A striking example of this interrelatedness is demonstrated in our current environmental challenges, particularly climate change.

Understanding that the peace within each of us, or the lack thereof, is shared with all others is essential to creating Peace on Earth. Doing our best to live lives that hold a deep peace within is the call. By doing so we can know that we are contributing to the good of all. That is the type of peace I'm talking about.

Think back on a time when you felt especially wonderful. You had no anxieties, no regrets, no fears or worries. It is the type of memory that could prompt you to breathe out a sigh of blissful remembrance. Were you in a special place in nature or on vacation? Were you cuddling a young child or loving pet? Perhaps you were listening to your favorite symphony or visiting a special exhibition at a museum. You felt serene, safe, purposeful and alive.

Thankfully, there are periods of peace like this in all our lives. The deep, overriding sensation of pure contentment that overcomes us during these times is the type of peace I'm talking about. *Holding the Power of Peace* compels us to discover this feeling in ourselves. We can then share our peace with others by practicing to consciously recreate

the feeling in our bodies until we are able to summon it on demand.

My life presents me with many challenges that can, and often do, disrupt my peaceful center. However, with awareness, practice and a deep feeling of contribution and connection to others, I am learning to return to serenity much more quickly than in the past. This practice is teaching me the ability, the *response-ability*, to focus my attention on thoughts that create peace for me.

The right man sitting in his
house and thinking the right
thought will be heard even
a hundred miles away.

— *Chinese Proverb*