

TEACHING PEACE: A GLANCE OVER DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract

“We must learn peace, and teach peace, so that we can be peace, and live in peace.”

Mattie J.T.Stepanek

In this fastest growing world, where we are asked to answer what we lack in, despite of many innovation, needless to say, we encounter only one word that is, PEACE. The word ‘peace’ stands for freedom from war and violence. Moreover, there are different allegorical version of peace such as inner peace related to contended soul, domestic peace pertaining to healthy relationships in family/ies, and the world peace refraining from terrorism and any war. The core objectives of this paper are to probe in to various perspectives of teaching peace along with discussing giants who lead exemplary contribution worldwide such as Nelson Mandela, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Buddha, Leo Tolstoy, The14th Dalai Lama, Swami Vivekananda, etc. Simultaneously, the paper traces upon how life skills and soft skills can also accelerate peace through the personality development and behavioural change in the society, and so to the nation and finally, worldwide through various social media.

Keywords: Teaching Peace, Life skills, Soft skills, etc.

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Introduction

Considering Peace, in our life in this digitized, fastest age of 3G and 4G, what we lack in, is peace of mind, not only that we have been continuously threaten by terrorist who are active worldwide just to cause terror and ensure the world unsafe. Moreover, we are not safe even in the social community due to communal riots regarding different religion, community or caste even we have witnessed the want of domestic peace as we don't have life-skills and soft skills to maintain our relationships either with the society or at the global level.

The basic objective of the paper is to look in to the history and study well- known global peace- makers who were instrumental bringing vast change in this world with their in-built life skills and soft skills. The second is to know how different religions propagate peace and love. The third one is how life skills and soft skills training stimulate peace not only to the one's self but to the family, society, country and finally to the world simultaneously.

Different Connotation of Peace

To begin with etymological meaning of the word 'peace', it came in to English in the middle of the 12th century, coined from French 'pais' via Latin 'pax' denotes 'freedom from civil disorder' seems more of the military and government.

- As per **Greek origin Irene** for Peace and **New Testament** peace is absence of dissension, violence, or war.
- Peace is also viewed as concord, or harmony and tranquillity
- In **East**; it is viewed as peace of mind or serenity.
- Peace can be defined as a state of law or civil government, a state of justice or goodness, a balance or equilibrium of Powers.
- Amity, friendship, harmony, concord, tranquillity, repose, quiescence, truce, pacification, and neutrality are the different **allegorical meaning** of Peace.(1125)

Religion and Peace

Nowadays, Religion is the only means to distort the 'world peace.' In the name of justice and religion, the big troops are scattered worldwide just to bombard the world's peace. But in

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fact, no religion facilitates violence. According to **Jasper Fforde**, 'Religion isn't a cause of war, it's the excuse.(The Eyre Affair : 2001)

Different holy books have always passed the message of adapting virtues; like kindness, love, non-violence, peace, forgive and forget etc.

"The Lord lives in the heart of every creature. He turns them round and round upon the wheel of Maya. Take refuge utterly in Him. By his grace you will find supreme peace, and the state which is beyond all change." --**Hinduism (18:61, 62)**

"If a man sings of God and hears of Him, And lets love of God sprout within him, All his sorrows shall vanish, And in his mind, God will bestow abiding peace." --**Sikhism**

"A Muslim is one who surrenders to the will of Allah and is an establisher of peace (while Islam means establishment of peace, Muslim means one who establishes peace through his actions and conduct)."--**Islam**

"To be in harmony with others, you must be at peace with yourself" --**Buddhism**

"The whole of the Torah is for the purpose of promoting peace." --**Judaism**

"All things exist for world peace." --Perfect Liberty Kyodan "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called sons of God." --**Christianity (Smoker,1996)**

Peace Makers: Keeping an insight

Up till now, there have been 1479 peacemakers listed in the world history. Here are the few, the world fame, who belong to different race, religion and occupation but one thing is unique in them is: they rose for non-violence, racism, untouchability, truth, downtrodden, social dispute, Social biases and for the poorest of the poor etc. They led exemplary life, extending their philosophy to many of the rest peacemakers born later and going to do the same in future too.

Lord Buddha, (563-483 BC) who was the Prince Siddhartha, forsook the luxury of a palace to seek enlightenment, realising the essential unreality of the world and attained Nirvana's blessings. Later on the enlightened soul spent all his life teaching his philosophy of inner peace, detachment and how to attain liberation from earthly suffering by escaping from the endless cycles of birth and death.

World Literature Fame, the author of 'War and Peace', **Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910)** was the one who influenced Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King to the path of Non-violence through his writings as he was committed to principles of non-violence. His literal interpretation of the ethical principles of Jesus Christ led to the creation of his non-violent philosophy.

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Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902) was a Hindu monk and direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna. Vivekananda played a key role in the introduction of Indian yoga and Vedanta philosophy in the West. He made a strong impression at the inaugural World Parliament of Religions in Chicago, 1893 giving a powerful speech on the underlying unity of world religions. He taught a philosophy of traditional meditation and also selfless service (karma yoga). He advocated emancipation for Indian women and an end to the worst excess of the caste system. He is considered an important figurehead of India's growing self-confidence and later nationalist leaders often said they were inspired by his teachings and personality.

Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948), Father of the Nation, a prominent Indian political leader who campaigned for Indian independence with the principles of non-violence (Ahimsa) principles and peaceful disobedience. Not only that, on 15 June 2007, The United Nations General Assembly voted to establish 2 October as the International Day of Non-Violence. Moreover, Gandhi became the embodiment of simple living high thinking with his simple life-style in the world.

Martin Luther King Jr (1929-1968) was an American Baptist minister and one of America's most influential civil rights activists who was a leader in the African-American Civil Rights Movement. He is best known for his role in the advancement of civil rights using nonviolent civil disobedience based on his Christian beliefs. His passionate, but non violent protests, helped to raise awareness of racial inequalities in America, leading to significant political change. Martin Luther King Jr was also an eloquent orator who captured the imagination and hearts of people, both black and white. During his time at University Martin Luther King became aware of the vast inequality and injustice faced by black Americans; in particular he was influenced by Gandhi's philosophy of non-violent protest On October 14, 1964, King received the Nobel Peace Prize for combating racial inequality through nonviolent resistance.

The founder of the Missionaries of Charity, **Mother Teresa (1910-1997)**, who was honoured Nobel Peace Prize in 1997 for her lifetime contribution to people with HIV/AIDS, leprosy and tuberculosis, alcoholics, orphan children, mentally ill people, prostitutes, the aged ones, street people, or what we call the downtrodden, etc. Needless to say she was the synonym of compassion, kindness and love. Her Missionaries of charity has grown worldwide with the over 4,500 religious sisters , and an associated brotherhood of 300 members, operating 610 missions in 133 countries. On 19 October 2003, she was beatified as "Blessed Teresa of Calcutta". A second miracle was credited to her intercession by Pope Francis, in December 2015, paving the way for her to be recognised as a saint by the Roman Catholic Church. She is considered one of the greatest humanitarians of the 20th century; she was canonized as Saint Teresa of Calcutta in 2016.

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Nelson Mandela (1918 – 2013) was a South African political activist who spent over 20 years in prison for his opposition to the apartheid regime. Later on he was elected the first leader of a democratic South Africa. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize (jointly with F.W. de Klerk) in 1993 for his work in helping to end racial segregation in South Africa. He is considered the father of a democratic South Africa and widely admired for his ability to bring together a nation, previously divided by apartheid. Nelson Mandela is one of the most admired political leaders of the Twentieth and Twenty First Century for his vision to forgive and forget a new ‘rainbow’ nation and became a global symbol of goodwill and how people can make a real contribution to peace.

The 14th Dalai Lama (1935-) is the spiritual leader of Tibet, at the age of 2, he was picked out as the rebirth of the thirteenth Dalai Lama and sent for formal monastic training to become a Buddhist monk and eventually become the spiritual head of the Tibetan people. He has sought to protect the interests of the Tibetans whilst promoting a non-violent approach to the Chinese. He teaches the importance of compassion for promoting happiness and inner peace. (biographyonline.net)

Below is the table illustrating life skills/Soft skills of the great Peacemakers:

Sr. No	Peacemakers	Inborn Life Skills/ Soft Skills
1	Lord Buddha, (563-483 BC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication Skills
2	Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership
3	Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation
4	Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pro-active
5	Martin Luther King Jr (1929-1968)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empathy
6	Mother Teresa (1910-1997)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compassion
7	Nelson Mandela (1918 – 2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humanity
8	The 14th Dalai Lama (1935-)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpersonal skills
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong Determination
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimism
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spirituality
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great tolerance

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Life Skills & Soft Skills: the stimulators of Peace

To live to the challenge of globalization which is in line with the era of information economy, the strength of a nation is strongly dependent on the ability of its citizen to be highly intellectual and skillful. The development of human capital is thus important and necessary since it drives the nation to the envision vision and mission. Without a quality human capital, a nation will be weak as there is no human factor that is capable to embark on new initiatives and perspectives. A quality human capital comes from a quality education process. A carefully designed and well planned education system is critical to developing such human capital. Thus, institution of higher learning plays a very important role to produce a human capital that is highly knowledgeable and skillful to meet the demand and expectations of many people. The teaching and learning processes in institutions of higher learning should be capable to provide such knowledge and skills to future graduates. (Jain, 2009)

The Life Skills and Soft Skills are same, used in different names. The skills which are necessary for living happy and productive life is called life skills. The skills, which need to be handled softly (with care), are called soft skills. But all the topics that are covered in Life Skills are also covered in Soft skills. Both the skills facilitate our EQ -Emotional Intelligence, SQ - Social Intelligence and SQ -Spiritual Intelligence that are requisite for Leadership Skill and any other life skills /soft skills. Our EQ- emotional intelligence, allows us to perceive, understand, use, and manage emotions, SQ-Social intelligence is also called ‘interpersonal intelligence.’ It is the ability to understand, manage, and navigate complex social networks and SQ- Spiritual intelligence facilitates everyday problem solving and goal attainment.

Life skills are behaviours that enable individuals to adapt and deal effectively with the demands and challenges of life. Life skills education is designed to facilitate the practice and reinforcement of psychosocial skills in a culturally and developmentally appropriate way; it contributes to the promotion of personal and social development, the prevention of health and social problems, and the protection of human rights

The Ten core Life Skills as laid down by WHO are:

Life Skills

Social Skills

Self awareness
Effective Communication
Interpersonal Relationship
Empathy

Thinking Skills

Creative Thinking
Critical Thinking
Decision Making
Problem Solving

Emotional Skills

Coping with Stress
Coping with Emotions

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Importance of Life Skills' Education:

- Life skills motivate healthy development of social and emotional skills in adolescents who are soon going to be an adult.
- It moulds adolescents' individual personality through various skills such as problem solving skills, interpersonal skills, communication skills, etc.
- It helps adolescents to differentiate between hearing and listening and thus, ensuring less development misconceptions or miscommunications regarding issues such as drugs, alcoholism etc.(WHO,2009)
- It delays the onset of the abuse of tobacco, alcohol etc.
- It promotes the development of positive self-esteem and teaches anger control.(Jain, 2009)

According to Anna Mar, there are 87 soft skills. (2016) **Soft Skills** are difficult to systemize and automate. They are the skills that define leadership and creativity. Soft skills is a sociological term, also known as “people skills” which refers to the cluster of personality traits, social graces, ability with language, Personal habits, friendliness and optimism that mark people to varying degrees. Soft skills complement hard skills, which are the technical requirements of a job. Soft skills also include strategic thinking, managing processes and technologies, promoting the support centre within the organization and building upon customer relationships. They're critical to the success of the business.

Soft Skills

- **Communicative Skills:** Oral and Aural skills to deliver idea clearly, effectively with confidence along with enhancing active listening skill to respond accordingly
- **Critical Thinking and Problem Solving Skills:** Ability to identify and analyze problems in difficult situation and make justifiable evaluation. Ability to expand and improve thinking skills such as explanation, analysis and evaluate discussion. Ability to find ideas and look for alternative solutions.
- **Team Work:** Ability to build a good rapport, interact and work effectively with others. Ability to understand and play the role of a leader and follower alternatively. Ability to recognize and respect others attitude, behavior and beliefs.
- **Life-Long Learning & Information Management Skill:** Ability to find and manage relevant information from various sources. Ability to receive new ideas performs autonomy learning.
- **Entrepreneurship skill:** Ability to identify job opportunities.

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- **Ethics, Moral & Professional:** Ability to understand the economy crisis, environment and social cultural aspects professionally. Ability to analyze make problem solving decisions related to ethics.
- **Leadership skill:** Knowledge of the basic theories of leadership. Ability to lead a project.

Communication skills are the backbone of all succeeding skills followed by Interpersonal skills, Problem solving, Leadership skills, Information Management skills etc. As it is being said: “most times it’s not what you say, it’s how you say matters the most.” And most importantly what Arnold Bennett wrote: ninety percent of the friction of the daily life is caused by tone of voice”, we need to consider seriously.

Towards Widening Peace:

In today’s world, peace needs to be more than just a word. 21st September is observed as ‘The World Peace Day’ or ‘International Day of Peace’ annually dedicating to the absence of war and violence worldwide whereas 2nd October (2007) is also announced as ‘International Day of non-violence. ‘One can propagate peace through ICT- Information Communication Technology and other medium.

- Intranet: Peace related discussion can be held by using intranet at school peers
- Internet: Through You tube, Blogs, online forum, E-books, one can propagate peace via movie, moral stories, peace related blogs, etc.
- There are around top 48 free Social networking apps based on their popularity that connects us to the world wide those are Face book, twitter, Meet Me, Google Plus, Dot429, Netlog, Piczo, Orkut, etc.(www.appapeal.com)
- Interactive Peace related Discussion through Interactive Whiteboard
- Peace based Power Point Presentation
- Educating through poster making competition via various peace symbols.
- Skit on Peace and Harmony
- Drama/ one act plays/ poem on the theme of Peace
- Different Games
- Peace Television / Peace based Documentary
- Vlog on Peace
- Podcast on Peace
- Art and Sport are the pure medium to propagate Peace and kinship worldwide. Besides, its health benefits, art and sport have the power to develop sportsman spirit to digest failure or victory with a stable state and stands out as a strong citizen of any country.
- Yoga is in itself a harbinger of Peace to its extreme level.

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Peace One Day is a non-profit organisation (NGO), founded in 1999. There is an open invitation from Pinwheels for Peace to the people across the world to anticipate in the movement of pinwheels spinning in the wind to signify Peace and Harmony. United States, Great Britain, South America, Australia, the Middle East, Canada, Africa, Europe and Asia are the part of this world campaign for Peace. In 2001 due to the constant efforts of the Peace One Day NGO, the member states of the United Nations unanimously adopted the first ever annual day of global ceasefire and non-violence on 21 September – Peace Day. By developing our attitude towards the whole world as said in Sanskrit ‘वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्’, ‘Whole world is as one family’, we can maintain peace in the world.

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