



Nine Ways of Waging Peace

- 1) Stop, breathe, detach. We need to name and claim the hurt, the anger, the feeling that the person who has harmed or hurt us has inflicted upon us. We need to be aware of and name the feelings of anger or resentment but not allow them to consume us. How often have we given the advice to someone who is upset, “Take a deep breath?” This is the beginning of calming the inner spirit. Take a deep breath.
- 2) Walk a few steps in the shoes of another. If you’d really like to get some spiritual exercise, walk a mile in their shoes! Imagine the other person as a child. What’s he/she like on the inside? What stories and setbacks, relationships and losses have formed this person into who he/she is?
- 3) “To understand is to ‘stand under’ which is a good way to understand.” In waging peace, we seek to create safe places where a person can be his/her true self. We established circles of healing, trust, truth so people with differences can come together and talk and listen to one another. Help me to understand how we have arrived at such different places?
- 4) Acknowledgement and acceptance. Understanding can lead to acceptance of the other for who she/he is; accept what has happened as part of life.
- 5) Look closely at the person we find difficult to love. Try to find something he/she does to love in him/her: His smile. Her willingness to help others. His generosity of spirit. Her stubbornness. His passion. Her creativity.

- 6) Forgiveness. What happened in the past cannot be changed. What we can change is how we move on from what has happened. We don't forget but we pray for the grace to forgive. Remember: forgiveness is an act of will. It is a choice influenced and informed by God's grace. I choose to forgive rather than be stuck in the mud of resentment and hurt. I choose not to allow what the other has done to influence how I will respond. I will not allow the hurt or disappointment to damage my destiny as a child of God.
- 7) Open your heart: Look for the friend hidden within the one with whom you are estranged.
- 8) Common ground: look for areas of agreement, places of connection in our stories.
- 9) Reach out: Don't wait for an apology. Reach out to the other.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Galatians 5, 22

