

PEACEFUL LIVING

Daily Meditations for Living with
Love, Healing and **Compassion**



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A PuddleDancer Press Book

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PuddleDancer Press, Permissions Dept.
P.O. Box 231129, Encinitas, CA 92023-1129
Fax: 1-858-759-6967, email@PuddleDancer.com

Author: Mary Mackenzie
Editing: Meadowlark Communications, Inc., www.larkonline.net
Cover and interior design: Lightbourne, Inc., www.lightbourne.com
Cover photography: www.gettyimages.com

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Mackenzie, Mary, 1958-

Peaceful living : daily meditations for living with love, healing, and
compassion / by Mary Mackenzie.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN-13: 978-1-892005-19-9 (pbk. : alk. paper)

1. Conduct of life. 2. Interpersonal communication. 3.
Nonviolence--Psychological aspects. 4. Meditations. I. Title.
BF637.C5M323 2005
158.1'28--dc22

2005017820

CONTENTS

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	vii
<i>Introduction</i>	1
<i>Feelings and Needs Lists</i>	3
<i>Meditations for</i> JANUARY	6
<i>Meditations for</i> FEBRUARY	44
<i>Meditations for</i> MARCH	78
<i>Meditations for</i> APRIL	112
<i>Meditations for</i> MAY	148
<i>Meditations for</i> JUNE	182
<i>Meditations for</i> JULY	213
<i>Meditations for</i> AUGUST	249
<i>Meditations for</i> SEPTEMBER	286
<i>Meditations for</i> OCTOBER	318
<i>Meditations for</i> NOVEMBER	353
<i>Meditations for</i> DECEMBER	386
<i>Index</i>	423
<i>How You Can Use the NVC Process</i>	434
<i>About CNVC and NVC</i>	435
<i>About PuddleDancer Press</i>	436
<i>Trade Book from PuddleDancer Press</i>	437
<i>Trade Booklets from PuddleDancer Press</i>	438
<i>About the Author</i>	439

Meditations for
JANUARY



JANUARY 1

If we ourselves remain angry and then sing world peace, it has little meaning. First, our individual self must learn peace. This we can practice. Then we can teach the rest of the world.

—The Dalai Lama

Setting Goals for the New Year

What do you want to focus on this year? What are your goals, hopes, and dreams? It's important to make your goals concrete and specific. Don't just say that you want to be happier; consider how you would like your life to be different. What if your goal is to support world peace by living your own life more peacefully? Consider the specific ways you will do this, such as learning Nonviolent Communication, taking a course on anger management, working a twelve-step program, or seeing a therapist. If your goal is to contribute to world peace, your actions can be very specific and concrete. Avoid focusing on what you don't want, such as conflict at work. Rather, focus on what you want, such as harmony at work. When your goals are concrete and positively worded, you can begin to manifest them. This simple process can have a profound impact on your success.

Take a few minutes today to write down your goals for the year, knowing that the goal-setting process is the first step toward manifesting your dreams.



JANUARY 2

The Nonviolent Communication process strengthens our ability to remain human, even under trying conditions. It reminds us about what we already know—how we humans were meant to relate to one another—and assists us in living in ways that concretely manifests this knowledge.

—Marshall B. Rosenberg, Ph.D.

Nonviolent Communication

Nonviolent Communication is a communication process and a model for living that was developed by Marshall B. Rosenberg, Ph.D. over 40 years ago. It is used in 35 countries worldwide. The two primary components of this process are: 1) a process for living that values everyone's needs equally, and that values connections with people more than being right or winning; and 2) a set of tools that helps us do this.

Most of us have been taught a way of living that promotes distrust and self-protection. In contrast, Nonviolent Communication teaches us that true safety lies in our ability to openly connect with ourselves and other people, to live authentically, and to respond to all situations with compassion and humanity. This process promotes peaceful living on a daily basis.

Be aware today of the times that your behaviors or attitudes promote distrust and self-protection, rather than compassion and humanity.



JANUARY 3

I saw my Lord with the eye of my heart, and I said:

Who art Thou? He said: Thou.

—Al-Hallaj

What Is Nonviolent Communication?

Nonviolent Communication (sometimes known as Compassionate Communication) is a way of inter-acting that facilitates the flow of communication needed to resolve differences peacefully. It focuses on shared human values and needs, and encourages the use of language that increases good will, and avoidance of language that contributes to resentment or lowered self-esteem.

Nonviolent Communication assumes that enriching life is the most satisfying motivation for doing things, rather than being motivated by fear, guilt, blame, or shame. It emphasizes taking personal responsibility for choices and improving the quality of relationships as a primary goal. It is effective even when other people involved are not familiar with the process.

—Marshall B. Rosenberg, Ph.D.

The four components of Nonviolent Communication are:

Observations—observing a situation without moralistic judgment, or diagnosis.

Feelings—expressing to another how you feel without assigning blame.

Needs—expressing to another which of your universal needs are unmet or which you would like to have met.

Request—expressing a specific, doable request of another person in an effort to help you meet your needs.

For today, focus on making observations without moralistic judgment in at least two of your interactions.



JANUARY 4

I am not easily frightened. Not because I am brave but because I know that I am dealing with human beings, and that I must try as hard as I can to understand everything that anyone ever does.

—Etty Hillesum, Holocaust survivor

Improving Relationships as a Primary Goal

Compassionate Communication suggests that improving the quality of our relationships is a primary goal. Indeed, that connection with ourselves and other people takes a higher priority than being right, winning, making more money, or looking good to other people. If you focus on *improving the quality of your relationships* through deeper connections, you will improve the state of your life, enhance the peace and love in your life, and feel better about yourself.

I learned this through personal experience. I worked from time to time with a business colleague. Over the years, our relationship deteriorated to the point where we had no civil connections with each other. Our association was worst just as I was starting to look at how I contributed to the angst in my relationships. As a result, I started to focus more on my connections with people rather than trying to be right or to win arguments. Within a remarkably short time, my colleague was telling me how much she admired the changes

Meditations for
SEPTEMBER



SEPTEMBER 1

*We don't get to know people when they come to us;
we must go to them to find out what they are like.*

—Goethe

Focus on Connecting

I think my early friends had incredible stamina. I had built such a high wall around my heart that they had to chip away at it to connect with me. I greatly appreciate their attempts to connect, but now the people in my life no longer have to make this effort. I receive the connection I desire because *I focus on connecting* with people. When I see someone in pain, I make myself available to them. When I see someone in the store whom I know, I go out of my way to greet them. I express appreciation to people when they have contributed to my life, and I let them know when I wish things had happened differently. I am present, loving, and available for a connection, not because I think other people want it (although I believe they do), but because *I want it*. I want to live in a world where people care for each other, so I actively create that world. If you want to get to know someone, let her know you. If you want someone to connect with you, connect with her. Take the first step and you will change your life.

Be aware today of opportunities to
create what you want by living it.



SEPTEMBER 2

*Fanaticism consists in redoubling your effort
when you have forgotten your aim.*

—George Santayana

Focusing on Needs to Enrich Your Life

Strategies are the means we use to meet our underlying needs. Many of us are less than successful at meeting our needs because we become stuck on strategies that rarely work. Perhaps we are so focused on getting a specific job or promotion that we lose sight of the needs we want to meet with the new position. In this case, the job or promotion is the strategy. What is the need? Is it financial security, a challenge, belonging to a different group, or ease? Will this job meet the needs we are focused on? Are there other ways we can meet them?

When I worked in higher education, I went to bat for pay increases and promotions. My goal was to make more money, I thought. Now, I think my deep underlying need was reassurance that I was valued in the organization and that I made a difference. Now, I make less money but I am better off financially, I am much happier, and I know that I am valued in my organization. If I had stayed focused solely on my salary, I never would have discovered the joy of meeting my need to be valued. I would not have known that there are many ways to meet my need for financial security.

Rather than focus on your strategies, focus on the needs you wish to meet. You might see a strategy that you would not have thought of, but if it will head you in the direction of your underlying need, go with it. Then feel the joy of living in ways that meet your needs.

Today, focus on your needs, rather than your strategies.
It just might open new possibilities for change.



SEPTEMBER 3

Live each day as if your life had just begun.

—Goethe

Doing Something Different

This is it. Today is the day to be open to others. Maybe it's scary to be vulnerable, but what is the alternative? Keep doing the same things and you will have the same results. Make a change right now. Do something different. What is your greatest need at this moment? Is it love, support, compassion, financial security, hope, family, friendship, shelter, food, or something I haven't mentioned? Name one thing you can do right now that will bring you closer to meeting that need. Do it today. Don't put it off. This is your life.

Commit to doing one thing that will bring
you closer to meeting a need today.



SEPTEMBER 4

*Whenever you have seen God pass, mark it,
and go and sit in that window again.*

—Henry Ward Beecher

Shedding Light on What Works

What works in your life right now? What do you enjoy? Notice what you have done to make this area of your life a success. Can you use the same principles to shed light on another area of your life that you would like to change? If a strategy works, take note, and do it again. So much of the time, we focus on what doesn't work. But there is just as much wisdom in noticing what does work and why. This awareness serves two purposes: It allows us to clarify how we currently meet our needs, and it allows us to feel gratitude for the aspects of our lives we enjoy. When we do this, we shift our attitude toward success and celebration, and experience both relief and joy.

Notice what is working in your life and how you manifest your success. Then find ways to use this information to create more joy.



SEPTEMBER 5

Some people are always grumbling that roses have thorns; I am thankful that thorns have roses.

—Alphonse Karr

Manifesting What We Love

We manifest whatever we focus on. If you focus on the negative, you will receive negativity. If you focus on what works, you will experience success. In a way, focusing on what we love is a form of affirmation.