

COLUMN TITLE: Prehistoric Astronautica  
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ARTICLE TITLE: Creating a Culture of Peace

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The following are excerpts from a speech given by the author at a Youth Leadership Conference on October 8, 2000 in Toronto.

Anger. Fear. Hatred. Obsession. Greed. Revenge. These are just a few of the emotions that run rampant in an Age dominated by war, conflict, and prejudice. And it is an unpleasant, lingering fact that these strong emotions are still fueling the ethnic wars and cultural conflicts in our world today.

But what is perhaps equally unfortunate, producing an equally unpleasant reality is the tacit acceptance, if not ignorance, of the severe ramifications of war, conflict and prejudice, not only in the long term and in our entire world, but in the short term and in our daily life. The wholly destructive aspects of these human actions are producing immeasurable damages not only to our environment, not only to our global community, but to the individual human psyche.

It is of course a given that those who are in the midst of war, conflict and prejudice, suffer the immediate and painful consequences of those actions from an external source, commonly labeled as 'the enemy.' But an insidious, perhaps more disturbing aspect to this is how we, the on-lookers simply watch, give at most a sympathetic shake of the head, before we continue in our own daily lives.

If we think about it, by allowing violence, murder, and destruction to run rampant, we are creating causes in our lives, the effects of which are horrific to consider. Surely, we must actively do something?

In truth, it is up to us to create a Culture of Peace, and not let laziness create a passivity within. Undoubtedly, this can be a difficult thing to accomplish in ourselves, but we must realize the ramifications of our passivity, and root out the causes of it in order to truly participate in a Culture of Peace. Key to this is the acknowledgement that we must not be desensitized by the real consequences of violence and prejudice in the world, no matter where it is.

I would like to emphasize that the real problems of society, which manifest themselves in war, conflict and prejudice, cannot be resolved by passive acceptance of the horrors and atrocities humanity is capable of doing. Yes it is true that each of us has our own separate, distinct lives, each with a specific mission in life. Yet, we should not—indeed we cannot—allow the regular activities of daily life inhibit our responsibility as part of the human family and global community to create a Culture devoid of the social devastation, physical destruction, and psychological depression caused by war, conflict and prejudice.

