

A Meditation for World Labyrinth Day: Peace, Within and Without

Oxford Languages defines **peace** as “freedom from disturbance; tranquility” and “a state or period in which there is no war, or a war has ended”.

1. What examples of *the absence of this peace* come to mind?
2. Is your experience of this kind of peace rare or common?
3. Who (or what entity) is responsible for the achievement of this kind of peace?
4. Does this peace spread beyond or encompass more than humans?

Oxford Languages defines **tranquility** as “a state of calm”.

5. Is tranquility an internal state or an external state? Some of both?
6. Where were you the last time you felt this tranquility?
7. Take a moment and remember those feelings.
8. Breathe deeply, counting to 4 breathing in through your nose, holding for a count of 2 and then slowly exhaling through your mouth to a count of 6. Do this 3 times.

Scripture uses the word **shalom**, often translated as peace, throughout the Old and New Testaments. Rabbi David Zaslow says¹: “the Hebrew word shalom does not mean ‘peace,’ at least not in the English sense of the word. It comes from a Hebrew root-word that means ‘**wholeness.**’”

9. How would you describe “wholeness”?
10. Is wholeness something we can work toward and achieve as individuals?

The Rabbi continues: “In the Hebraic way of thinking, **wholeness is the joining together of opposites.** That’s why we say “shalom” when we greet friends and when we wish them farewell. In the most opposite of situations (coming and going) we use the same word, “shalom.” There is a hidden connection to all our comings and goings; they are wondrously linked together. When I come from somewhere, I am going to someplace else.”

11. Where did you come from today? Choose 3 single words that describe that place.
12. Is this place a place of wholeness or shalom?
13. Where will you go when you leave this place?
14. What single action could you take when you arrive to bring wholeness (shalom) to this new place?

As you retrace your steps on the labyrinth, consider what wholeness (shalom) means in your home, your neighborhood and in our world. What can you do today to bring shalom to the places you go?

¹ <https://rabbidavidzaslow.com/the-deeper-meaning-of-shalom/>