

It's easy to get trapped into believing we can help people by saying or doing something or even changing our behavior in some way. There's a word for it: placate-*make someone less angry or hostile*. It rarely works, but when it does it often comes with the nasty side effects of giving the *someone* tools with which they can manipulate us. This concept of placation goes against a profound esoteric truth that most find extremely difficult to understand. The idea is self-development and goes generally like this: *The only one who can develop you, change your mind or alter your behavior is you*. If we rely primarily on the mind of the five senses, which is our default perception, this appears to be a false statement, the same way denying the sun rises and sets seems false to the external, sense based mind. To this ordinary mind, the earth appears to be flat. If we get more accurate information we mentally adjust for the appearances with right knowledge. The same is true about the esoteric truth that we must develop ourselves. No one can do it for us. It's true we can get help from higher influences, but even that is conditional. We must be able to reach the place where higher influences are able to reach us. If you were drowning and someone held out a pole for you to get hold of to pull yourself to safety you would still have to reach the pole. After making whatever effort was necessary for you to reach the pole extended to you, you'd still have to get hold of it and hold on until you could be pulled to safety or make the effort to pull yourself to safety. It may not seem fair, but from the perspective of the five senses there's not much in life that's fair. Only a more objective view, from a higher level of Being, begins to make sense of the happenings we experience down here in the soup of life events.

Perhaps you've heard the term, *Sue for peace*. For our purposes I'll limit the use of the term to people in some form of relationship. The fact that they disagree isn't a problem. The problem ensues when one or both parties feel the need to get the other to *change* their point of view, thoughts, feelings or behavior to satisfy the requirements of the other. In a perfect world this wouldn't happen. Unfortunately if imperfect people with expectations, emotion backed demands and requirements, such as ourselves, populate the perfect world, perfection isn't realized and the world becomes a living hell to the degree we press our demands, requirements and expectations. Few people enjoy confrontation. Our life conditioning pushes us to seek comfort over truth more often than not. It takes something from outside our ordinary consciousness, an idea bigger than the kinds of ideas that belong to ordinary consciousness, to lift us out of the states we habitually inhabit. These ideas, the ideas that come from conscious people, act as stepping stones for those who wish to develop, transform into all they could be, all we are created to be. Alas, it's far easier to talk about, read about and think about than it is to put forth the necessary effort to prepare ourselves to receive those influences that can bring us closer to our potential. Think for a moment how many people would like to be concert pianists or violinist or exceptional sports figures or movie stars. Of the many millions who aspire there are so few who put forth the effort necessary to bring themselves closer to their dream. Even fewer persevere to the end they desire.

Making the choice to be real in a world devoted to what is false for the sake of appearances and comfort is much like wanting to be a concert pianist but never learning to play the piano. When we find out what it's going to cost us to reach our aim we tend to change our aim to something that takes far less effort. Better still would be some goal

that takes no real effort. Our desire for comfort outweighs our dreams and we find we placate ourselves, others and life in general. We sue for peace. One of the world's greatest esoteric teachers said, *Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword* (Matthew 10:34). Because it takes effort to create the force of understanding in ourselves few grasp the deep meaning in these words. They take the easy path of literal meaning. Another great teacher of esoteric truth said, *for the letter kills, but the spirit gives life* (2 Cor. 3:6). One who walks this path will find the truth of esotericism to be a sword that divides the higher from the lower, the coarse from the fine, the inner from the outer. There's more to be said but it would be much better for you to think on these things yourself and see the truth of them for yourself and in yourself. Rather than sue for peace out of fear or a desire for temporary comfort be willing to embrace the sword and let it divide the better part of you from the part that holds you down. The choice, if you come to the place where you can reach the pole, will be yours.