

# Charter for Compassion International

## PEACE AND NON-VIOLENCE



*Individuals have international duties which transcend the national obligations of obedience. Therefore, (individual citizens) have the duty to prevent crimes against peace and humanity from occurring.*

~ Nuremberg War Crime Tribunal,  
1950

### **Peace Begins in the Human Heart**

The concept of a “golden rule” in which we do to others only what we would want others to do to us, can be found in one form or another as far back as the civilizations of ancient China, Babylon, Egypt, Greece, and Rome. It has been called an “ethic of reciprocity,” and can be found in all cultures, and in all world religions as well as in the philosophies of humanists and existentialists. It is,

in short, an ethical code that most all of humanity can agree on. Why then do we find ourselves here in the 21<sup>st</sup> century inhabiting a world that is dangerously polarized, with a growing imbalance of power and wealth among the ever-increasing number of people on the Earth, with continuing wars that ravage populations and waste resources, with massive genocide and terrorist atrocities that endanger us all? How is it that we find humankind facing the terrifying possibility of environmental catastrophe? These questions confront us with a greater urgency than ever, and it is these questions that have led us to the human heart and the human brain—the great possibilities of compassion that lie within each human being—to identify a solution.

### **Imagine and Act with Us**

Hundreds of regional, national, and international organizations with millions of members currently exist in the hope of establishing a more peaceful and non-violent world. Now, however, more than any other time in history, we have both greater urgency and greater opportunity to connect all of these people, to work together to imagine and then build a compassionate world. Imagine a world where everyone is committed to living by the principle of compassion. What could that mean for the more than seven billion people that now share the planet? Imagine the impact of vast numbers of people “bringing compassion to life” in their own lives, in all their

families, in business, in education, in healthcare, in religious and spiritual practices, in the arts, and in an awareness of the environment. That is the vision and the commitment of the Charter for Compassion. We invite you to join us—to weave your compassion with the same heartfelt impulse of both friends and strangers throughout the Earth.

## **A Network of Networks**

The basis for the Global Compassion Movement is contained in the Charter for Compassion, a document that was conceived in February 2008 when the TED prize was awarded to Karen Armstrong for her wish to create, launch, and propagate a global compassion movement based on the Golden Rule. The Charter is an expression of the change we are working to implement, beginning with individuals but encompassing organizations, institutions, and communities (villages, hamlets, towns, cities, and countries)—throughout the globe. Our mission is to serve and support connection among people everywhere. Although The Charter for Compassion is in part supported by those who have committed themselves as Members, there is no fee for an organization to become a Partner. When your organization signs the Charter, it will have the opportunity to communicate with like-minded people and organizations worldwide.

## **Benefits of Becoming a Partner**

The Charter provides regular, open conference calls for each of its sectors (Business, Education, Environment, Healthcare, Peace, Religion/Spirituality, Scientific Research and The Arts),

usually with a provocative speaker. A summary report is published following each of these calls, and all Partners also receive general newsletters and announcements of upcoming events, conferences, and other information that may be of interest. Each Partner organization has a dedicated page within our website so that others can read about what an organization is doing and perhaps form alliances among organizations. An ongoing blog, relevant annotated bibliographies, and an ever-increasing library of resources is also available on our website. The Charter staff take seriously the need and the commitment to facilitate the connection of people who share the hope of making a difference.

## **Spotlight on a Few of Our Partners**

Here are just a few examples of Partners who have signed on to the Charter for Compassion. We encourage you to read more about them and then to join us by becoming a Partner.

**Global Tolerance** (London) is an international PR and communications organization that serves to promote tolerance, non-violence and understanding in society. Global Tolerance specializes in generating inspirational media coverage for faith and interfaith groups around the world, and has reached hundreds of millions of people with its campaigns over the last five years.

**International Cities of Peace™** (USA) is a nonprofit, tax-exempt association dedicated to connecting, promoting, and encouraging the global

How wonderful it is  
that nobody need wait  
a single moment  
before starting to  
improve the world.

~Anne Frank

cities of peace movement. An Advisory Council of leaders from global Cities of Peace organizations is working to create an all-inclusive, non-polarizing network of world citizens working to bring peace to their communities.

**September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows** (USA) is an organization founded by family members of those killed on September 11th who have united to turn their grief into action for peace. By developing and advocating nonviolent options and actions in the pursuit of justice, they hope to break the cycles of violence engendered by war and terrorism. Acknowledging their common experience with all people affected by violence throughout the world, they work to create a safer and more peaceful world for everyone.

**The Parents Circle: Families Forum** (Israel) is a joint Palestinian Israeli organization of over 600 families, all of whom have lost a close family member as a result of the prolonged conflict. Joint activities have shown that the reconciliation between individuals and nations is possible and it is this insight that they are trying to pass on to both sides of the conflict.

Become a Charter Partner. Visit our Charter for Compassion Website: [www.charterforcompassion.org](http://www.charterforcompassion.org).



Charter for **Compassion**