



# SATYA

Truthful in Thought, Word, and Actions

## YES! WE CAN PEACEBUILDERS September/October 2023

*"I have no right, by anything I do or say, to demean a human being in their own eyes. What matters is not what I think of them; it is what they think of themselves. To undermine a person's self-respect is a sin."  
Antoine de Saint-Exupery*



### **Mirror Mirror What Do You See Look More Closely, It Might Be Me**

by  
**Eleanor Levine**

Having read an interview with Naomi Klein about her new book, *"Doppelganger: A Trip Into the Mirror World,"* I was perplexed. I thought, so what. But I read it again, eventually finding the "so-what." Klein claims author Naomi Wolf as her doppelganger.

The two Naomis, often confused with one another, once shared similar world views, but later diverged. Klein remained left-ish, whereas Wolf unexpectedly shifted right-ish, embracing all sorts of conspiratorial views. Klein explores the consequences of and alternatives to writing off Wolf. To do so, she cleverly makes Wolf her doppelganger. Leaning into her Naomi-Wolfe-image, she reflects on her own behavior.

Of course, we want to know what this smart woman finds and why we should care. If I got it right, Klein finds she and doppelganger Wolf share some similar discomfoting concerns about goings-on in the world. With Wolf as her metaphor, Klein discovers that by ignoring, instead of embracing the seeds of another's discomforts, we risk prematurely alienating others as well as cutting off parts of ourselves. Klein's revelation comes when she recognizes that dismissing the Naomi Wolfs sends them straight into the welcoming arms of the Steve Bannons, who are more than willing to provide an alternative world narrative. Klein is not so naïve to believe she is responsible for the country's rightward shift. She is simply acknowledging that we

often share seeds of discomfoting truths which need to be addressed rather than dismissed. When we fail to acknowledge and address these, we contribute to growing political alienation and polarization in the U.S.

Why did it take so long for me to get Klein’s doppelganger metaphor? It’s because I could not put myself in Klein’s shoes. I could not acknowledge that I, too, often dismiss others expressing seeds of discomfoting truths. By so doing, I help push others into the welcoming arms of right-ish conspiratorialists. Although I don’t do it all the time, I do it often enough without recognizing it. Self-reflection is a bitch.

So, what is to be done? For me, it is realizing the seeds of discomfoting truths are points for discovery. I need to pay them more attention when talking to myself, colleagues, and others. I need to address them, discuss them, and not be afraid of saying I don’t have a ready answer or to ask, “how is it you or I think that?” I need to understand that people who live in differing realities from me, (Klein calls them alternate realities), often share similar uncomfortables. These can be the basis for dialog and understanding others. It would bring me closer to achieving what I consider Peaceful Co-existence.

*Eleanor Levine is a writer in the Writers' Affinity Group of Pace e Bene.Org*



## **Peace Day at Morro Bay Kids Club and Peace Day Morro Bay** **by** **Erin Bechtol**

Morro Bay, CA is an active Nonviolent City who work to build a culture of peace in their community year-round. They’ve worked to respond to the needs of their neighbors with mutual aid, and joined in the worldwide movement that is the 2023 Campaign Nonviolence Action Days.

Ruth Ann Angus with Yes We Can Peacebuilders in Morro Bay, CA shares that 70+ people attended their two events. She writes, “I held two events—one for kids on 9/22 and one for adults on 9/23. On Friday 9/22/23 we held a Peace Day event with 35 children from the Morro Bay Kids Club where we spent some time reading the Youth for Human Rights booklets including our 30 United Nations Articles of Human Rights. Then we gathered around tables to work on designing a quilt on large pieces

of paper that had the word "peace" stenciled on them. The kids used stickers with pictures and words of peace and other pictures emphasizing certain human rights in countries around the world. These drawings were photographed and sections of them will be made into fabric pieces that quilters can use to construct a quilt that we will auction off to raise funds for youth programs.

On Saturday 9/23/23 Peacebuilders held their yearly Morro Bay Peace Day event at the Estero Bay United Methodist Church. About 38 of us gathered outside around the peace pole to hear the explanation of International Peace Day and the Peace Pole and then went inside to hear the program with a talk by me called 'Words to Make Clear' talking about the words diversity, belonging, and empathy. We had another talk by Richard Kurrasch on the new 'Center for an Ecological Center.' We joined together in song with the UkeLadies group singing songs of peace. We had a fundraising item offering Peace Pickets that people can display in their yards.

With the kids we hope to instill a curiosity about nonviolence and a yearning to find the truth in their lives. We see them respond well to words like 'belonging,' and 'kindness,' and 'compassion' so we feel we are on the right track. With our adult group we strive to get them active in positive peacebuilding in their everyday lives and to join us in efforts to keep violence down in our town and the county. We are happy to note that with nonviolence education we are seeing a decrease in physical violence and a more welcoming and more healthy community attitude.

*Erin Bechtol is a peaceful nonviolence member of the staff at Pace e Bene Nonviolence Service. To see the article with all the photos go to:*

<https://paceebene.org/blog/2023/9/27/morro-bay?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=8b9e4d34-390c-4102-ac38-9c15ed9023f9>

## LINKS

Read Pay It Forward - Article by Ruth Ann Angus on Mutual Aid in Waging Nonviolence at: <https://wagingnonviolence.org/cnv/2023/09/mutual-aid-morro-bay/>

Paul Long from Our Walk Together - Does podcasts, You Tube videos, Newsletter on Franciscan Nonviolence. Paul is a Secular Franciscan. View the website at: <https://ourwalktogether.com/>

Jane Thornton of New Thought Musicians Showcase offers: Nonviolence / Peace Playlist from emPOWER Music & Arts <https://www.empowerma.com/nonviolence-playlist/>

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