



# Freedom Inside

A National Newsletter For Prisoners  
Based on the CwG Material  
Issue # 21 February 2005

## Step Five to Peace: Are We There Yet?

Freedom Inside  
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Step five to Peace states "I am willing to live my life as a demonstration of my beliefs."

*So, are we there yet? If we took the five steps to peace, shouldn't we be at peace now? Shouldn't we be able to stay at peace all the time?*

*To tell you the truth, I find step five to be unnecessary. I believe all my actions are in accord and in demonstration of my beliefs. Does this mean I'm always at peace? I'm afraid not.*

*It just means that I have a lot of beliefs that I live by. Some of them are quite contradictory. Which explains why I often live in peace while other times I don't. Sometimes I live in the moment and sometimes I react as I've done many times in my life. I just re-act, without much thought involved, without making any new choices, without conscious living, or real awareness of Who I Am.*

*I know some of you have done the five steps to peace with me. I doubt any of you feel that we've achieved everything we wanted with those steps.*

*I don't think we'd still be in this world if we were done with these experiences of self-definition and realization.*

*Actually, I find that knowing my*

*soul still has some work for me to do is one of the most empowering feelings I can have. The knowledge that I can re-create myself at each moment in whatever way I choose is a great testimony to my power.*

*I rejoice in the knowledge that I*

*"Actually, I find that knowing my soul still has some work for me to do is one of the most empowering feelings I can have."*

*can start Step One to Peace again, which is:*

*"I acknowledge that some of my old beliefs about God and about Life are no longer working."*

*So I'm starting over again. I've re-created my life according to new beliefs that are working for me now. But a lot of my thinking has been following (or leading) me for quite some time. These thoughts feel awfully familiar and are very repetitive.*

*How will I start Step One again? By focusing on my thoughts and actions even more closely, especially in situations that are familiar to me and in relationships that are comfortable and unchanged.*

*I'm recreating myself anew starting now. I just scored a big goal in my life by going through the 5 steps toward Peace. I've found new feelings and beliefs that better re-*

*flect Who I Really Am. I am a step closer to experiencing what I came here to be. Now, I will do what all hockey players (I'm Canadian. What can I say?) know to do after scoring a goal: go to the middle of the ice and start all over again.*

*And isn't that what's exciting and fun about sports? You always get another chance; you're never done.*

*The same thing can be said about Life. It's never set in stone. It's never over. We always get new opportunities to become more and more Who We Really Are. We always get new chances to make new choices.*

*Life is such an incredible trip! We were given this wonderful opportunity to experience ourselves any way we choose.*

*And we know for a fact that we haven't experienced all we can be in this life. Richard Bach's Reluctant Messiah says something like this: if we're still breathing, our soul's work isn't done.*

*I'm still breathing so I'm starting anew. I'm going to the middle of the ice and create a whole new game for myself. What fun!*

*Are you still breathing?  
What are you going to do about it?*

*Love,  
Janine*

## ***Now What?***

*You may have noticed that it's been awhile since the last issue of this newsletter. Since November, actually.*

*We've done all the steps to peace as determined by the CwG books. What now?*

*For the second time, I find myself re-evaluating the relevance of this newsletter in order to decide if it should continue or not.*

*It was always my intent, and still is, to have this newsletter be a voice for all of you to share your thoughts and feelings about your spirituality. J.M.'s words in this issue's Thoughts From the Inside article describe exactly my hopes for Freedom Inside.*

*It is my intent to let this newsletter reflect prisoners' views on Life. In order to do that, I will wait to have received enough articles, enough letters, poems, stories, anything you guys wish to send before publishing new issues.*

*Issues will be sent as soon as enough material is received. Otherwise, this publication may end. The choice is up to you. This is your newsletter. If, as J.M., you feel the need to connect with others in similar circumstances, please do so. It will be my greatest joy to be the intermediary in this spiritual connection. If not, I wish you joy and peace in your journey.*

*With much love,*

*Janine.*

## ***Thoughts From the Inside***

Ask yourself this question: Why are you reading this? I'll bet I know...because you want to know what it says. But why is that? Because, I'm guessing, you want to connect, in a way, with me. You want to connect with the people who put together this newsletter.

And why am I writing this? In hopes of connecting with you, a reader of Freedom Inside.

See, here's the problem: the other day a C.O. came into my pod and rounded up all the Christians. They went off to their church and did their Christian thing, together. The day before that, it had been the Native Americans, getting together to celebrate their beliefs. Muslims have their get-togethers, as do Jews and Wiccans. I saw them all, doing their things that they do, and it occurred to me that I don't have a day. Or a church. Or a weekly celebration. Or a chaplain. Or a study group. Or, and perhaps most importantly, a recognized religion. As far as I know, no one in this prison shares my philosophy, the CwG philosophy. I'm the only one.

Is it like that at all prisons? Just how common are we? Are you as alone as I am?

I'm writing this and you're reading this and that's just about all I've got. Without Freedom Inside and its readers, I have no contact with any other prisoners who share my spirituality. And yeah, that sucks.

Freedom Inside is important to me. It's my connection to spirituality. It's my shelter from this chaotic place in which we live. It's where I go and what I do when I need to connect with Who I Am. Indeed, Freedom Inside is a big part of me.

We don't have a day to get together and share our way of thinking, but we do have this newsletter. And if we are to organize, to come together and share with each other Who We Really Are, this publication is where we can begin.

Freedom Inside is for us. You and me. If you're reading this, then you need me as much as I need you. We all need each other. After all, We Are All One.

Sure, they've got their day. But I have You. I have Janine, and I have the mailbag, and I have all of my past issues of FI, and when I need to, I pull them out and connect with You. And any time you need to connect, you can do it. Just pick up your pencil and connect with me, with Us, with yourself, and with the One. Right now, this very second, I am in my little corner of the world, in prison in Arizona, waiting to hear from you. None of You are alone.

Prison is a strange place. Heck Earth is a strange place. We are not from here (prison or Earth), and until we go Home we'll all be out of our element. For those of us in prison, this is doubly true. You, to me, are a little chunk of Home. Come visit me on the pages of FI

Love and Respect,  
J.M.  
Arizona

## Actualizing My Fifth Step to Peace

According to the Hua Hu Ching:

“The highest truth cannot be put into words. Therefore, the greatest teacher has nothing to say. He simply gives himself in service and never worries.”

-Lao Tzu  
(about 2500 years ago)

CwG speaks of “acceptance” as being one of the five attitudes of God. In addition, I’ve also learned that “through our acceptance, we realize our purpose.” Well, in my acceptance of imprisonment, I’ve been granted the gift of a live and dynamic contextual field called a prison G.E.D. program. It is there that I get opportunities to re-create and demonstrate my truth. Within my service to my students/my fellow prisoners, I get to demonstrate that we are all special in God’s creation. Many of these soul-people that I’m interacting with will

speak negatively of themselves, either because they haven’t understood and/or solved certain academic problems, or perhaps because of their imprisonment. This is when I get to affirm some of the recognizable good in them; this is especially so when there is a correctable display of ignorance or misconception about who they are. I get to “give them back to themselves”. I let them know that who they are has not already been defined; “that every moment is a precise and perfect opportunity for them to decide, declare, created, express, experience, and fulfill who they are”. This is their choice.

For example, one of our students—who had been a supervisor in a warehouse before he got busted for some drug related offense—believed that his [experiences as a supervisor were] over, all because he no longer got to super-

wise the employees where he once worked. He has a high aptitude and is really smart; consequently he usually finishes his academic assignments long before the other students. After he’d finish his work, he used to just sit there in class and looked bored, or he’d attempt to leave—which violates the classroom discipline. I told him that he still had opportunities to BE a supervisor by helping his fellow prison classmates solve their academic problems; [by being] a team leader. He has now come to understand that BEing a supervisor or leader is an attribute that comes with conscious choice. Within my heart and soul, I can hear the voices of my Brother- and Sister-Souls longing to be free of the imprisonment of unserving beliefs about God-Life. Sharing with them that which I choose for myself is a demonstration of my truth and a source of my

freedom inside.

With much joy,  
H.J.  
North Carolina

—————

*Thank you so much H.J. for sharing your journey toward peace with all the readers of Freedom Inside. You are a great example that being free has nothing to do with where we find ourselves at any point.*

*Your light shines ever so brightly and warms us all. It certainly lights the lives of your students.*

*The wonderful thing about the warmth your light spreads is that it also warms you and lights your own life.*

*What a beautiful mirror you are. What a wonderful boomerang.*

*With love,  
Janine*

## Quotable Quotes

- |   |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
| “ When there is no enemy within, the enemies outside cannot hurt you.”                    | African Proverb         |
| “ Make happy those who are near and those who are far will come”                          | Chinese Proverb         |
| “ I can’t understand why people are frightened of new ideas. I’m frightened of old ones.” | John Cage               |
| “ Blessed is he who expects nothing for he shall never be disappointed.”                  | Jonathan Swift          |
| “ Listen or your tongue will keep you deaf.”  | Native American Proverb |
| “ Go as far as you can see, and when you get there, you’ll see farther.”                  | Anonymous               |

## ***Insert for Issue 21 of Freedom Inside, February 2005***

***Hi everybody,***

***The following is an excerpt from Wayne Dyer's There's a Spiritual Solution To Every Problem (2001, pp 106-110). I hope you enjoy it as much as I did.***

***Love,***

***Janine***

When you feel that your family, social, and work environments are poisoned in any way by the negativity and slowed down energy of others, you can do something about it. The following section represents a blueprint for a broader environmental energy field permanently free of contamination. The eight points long attributed by many to Mother Teresa of Calcutta are actually a version of "The Paradoxical Commandments" written by Kent M. Keith while he was a sophomore at Harvard University in the 1960s. These points are followed by my comments on each suggestion.

### **An Eight-Point Plan of Decontamination**

*People are often unreasonable, illogical, and self-centered. Forgive them anyway.* Forgiveness in your heart is like a cleansing agent for your energy field. When you notice the low energy conduct of others, rather than allowing it to impact and infect your immediate surroundings, send them a silent blessing and refuse to be seduced into joining them in their low energy. When you *forgive* them you choose to not be impacted in a negative manner.

*If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives. Be kind anyway.* Your field of energy is protected from contamination by kindness. Once you are independent of the accusations of others, you are unable to be angry and hurt over what others accuse you of. Be kind because it is you, not because of the reactions you want from others. Kindness that comes from your heart will suffice to keep you from being dragged down into an energy field infected by false accusations.

*If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies. Succeed anyway.* The world is filled with people who are looking for occasions to be offended. Your success at anything is enough to trigger such a reaction in others. Keep your energy field pristine by focusing on what you know to be your divine purpose, and by doing so, the universe will support and sustain you with what is labeled success. Others will be offended, but if you persist in ignoring their reactions, you will not allow the presence of false friends or true enemies to be a factor in your life.

*If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you. Be honest and frank anyway.* Your energy field will remain uncontaminated as long as you know that you are being honest and frank. This may attract others at the lower energies of dishonesty and cheating to try to take advantage of you. But you will not become their victim because you will have the sense of inner peace that characterizes higher and faster spiritual energy. Those who attempt to cheat you will respect and honor your position when you stay true to your spiritual values. Behave toward others from your highest self and you will eventually be free of the fear of being cheated. Ironically, when that fear disappears, the problem of being cheated also disappears.

*What you spend years building, someone may destroy overnight. Build anyway.* Do not build anything only for the purpose of having it completed. Build because it is your way of expressing your purpose. When you eat a banana the goal is not to finish it, but to enjoy each bite while nourishing yourself. Building something is a means of expressing yourself. If someone took all the books I've published and destroyed them, I would continue to write. If every tape recording of my lectures was destroyed, I would continue to speak. Everything in the material world that is built will ultimately be destroyed. Build not in fear of having it destroyed, but because you are giving expression to the infinite spirit within.

*If you find serenity and happiness, people may be jealous. Be happy anyway.* I always remind myself that there is no way to happiness. Happiness is the way. If you seek the reactions of others as the basis of your way of being then you have turned the source of your happiness over to those whose reactions you covet. Happiness is an inside job. You don't get it from anyone or anything; you bring it to everyone and every event of your life. Keep your energy field free of contamination by remembering that you are the source of the cleansing. Others may be jealous, find fault with you, and say terrible things about you, but you are free to choose happiness for yourself anyway. The by-product of your response is that you gradually impact their jealous and mean-spirited energy fields with your radiation happiness.

*The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow. Do good anyway.* Like being happy, doing good is something that you do as an expression of your invisible spiritual essence. Stop looking for the approval and gratitude of others as your reason to do good. Even if no one ever says thank you, do for others as your heart dictates from spirit, which is rooted in the faster energy of love, kindness, and connectedness to all. Your spirit urges you to express heart energy. Ego, rooted in the material world, urges you to do what you do so that you will be remembered and rewarded as if life were a contest. Listen to your spirit. Remind yourself to give love and do good because that is who you are, and for no other reasons.

*Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough. Give the world the best you've got anyway.* "The best," as used above, implies your highest, most sacred self. This is the fastest vibrational energy and the source of all problem resolution. Others may attempt to contaminate your energy field by demanding more of you, or by criticizing you repeatedly, or even by ignoring your efforts. When you return to your highest self, you are independent of those opinions almost instantly, and problems of feeling unappreciated are nonexistent. Give the world your spirit, and detach from the outcome of your efforts, and your energy field becomes less and less contaminated.

These eight suggestions that Mother Teresa adopted as a plan for life concludes with the truly profound essence of this offering. "You see, in the final analysis, it is all between you and God, it was never between you and them anyway."  
[...]

#### *THE FINAL ANALYSIS*

*People are often unreasonable, illogical and self-centered;  
Forgive them anyway.  
If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives;  
Be kind anyway.  
If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies;  
Succeed anyway.  
If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you;  
Be honest and frank anyway.  
What you spend years building, someone may destroy overnight;  
Build anyway.  
If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous;  
Be happy anyway.  
The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow;  
Do good anyway.  
Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough;  
Give the world the best you've got anyway.  
You see, in the final analysis, it is all between you and God;  
It was never between you and them anyway."*

-“The Final Analysis” is a version of the “Paradoxical Commandments” by Kent M. Keith



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Janine Cantin*

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