Introduction

Writing this book comes at a time when the whole world is embroiled in COVID-19. The coronavirus has drastically influenced everyone and everything, from the routinized interaction of people in public places, such as restaurants, to higher education, marketing, and the business world. COVID-19 has perturbed the power of prediction, control, and decision making and has fueled anxiety, fear, and anger. The world is no longer what it used to be – a place where people could easily walk in the hallway, shake hands, and hug one another. The simplest modes of communication have turned out to be the most dangerous ones, with people avoiding touch and hugs in earnest.

Life has lost its familiar cycle these days, and there are no signs of vivacity and livelihood similar to the ones that existed prior to the coronavirus. The streets seem to be empty and avenues appear to be desolate and forlorn. Above all, feelings of fear and anxiety and the tremor of petrification resonate their certainty in the midst of an ambiguous world rife with stress and intolerance.

Speaking of peace has always been significantly vital for human civilization. Yet, this time unfolds a conspicuous urgency for creating a peace-oriented world. COVID-19 has highlighted a series of shifts in our seemingly taken-for-granted world; it has altered our epistemic axioms, our existential assumptions, and our unquestionably lived assumptions.

There have been numerous scholarly works on peace and its implementation. Their topics have focused on peace education, peace-building strategies, international peace, and so forth.

This book chooses a different approach and offers a new perspective. The book follows a number of goals and objectives: It presents the essentiality of peace in life for growth, development, well-being, wellness, and creativity. It offers a brief overview of the major outlooks that can reiterate the vitality of peace in our living. It demonstrates some of the

1

closely knitted perspectives that propose and propound the ways and strategies that give rise to a peaceful world.

The distinctive features of the book that may espouse its salience in discussing the concept of peace coil around a string of interrelated issues: The defining characteristics of humanness may play a crucial role in achieving a sustainable, genuine, and authentic peace. The animalistic definition of human beings in their current forms may enable generative parlance on the conceptualization of peace and its ramifications but may not be able to thrive when it comes to establishing a pristine form of peace. Moreover, the exploration of ways and strategies to enliven peace in human communities needs to ultimately linger and visit human innerness in one way or another. This may pose the preponderance of a lively encounter with an influencing inner abode in human beings. Should there be no authenticity for the innerness of human beings, the peacekeeping and peace-building sources may appear to see their unsettling realm of claim.

Most important of all, this book offers a presentation of a new view on heart and heartfulness.

The Western world is first and foremost a world of calculation, rationality, linearity, analysis, reasoning, syllogism, and the mind. The foundations of this world propel its citizens to abide by the propositions that ultimately gain their sensibility within the mind-oriented framework. The mapping of this world is based on postulations that inextricably follow the mind-oriented framework.

The present book examines and presents the Western perspective on peace and then shifts to the Eastern perspective. Beginning with mainstream views of achieving peace at different levels, this book excavates their underlying guiding elements and argues for a new entry in the realm of psychology of peace. The book's arguments move toward a recondite analysis of peace structures within the human domain in the Western paradigm and then set out to underline a new paradigm known as heartfulness.

This book speaks of a new world different in shape and configuration, size and mode, nature and scope. The book posits a search within heart and heartfulness within a different paradigm that, albeit reconcilable with mind-driven human beings, calls for decomposing the taken-for-granted suppositions of the mind-driven world.

Although heart is brimming with polysemic implications in an unlimited repertoire of allusions and ascriptions, the book brings the concept of heartfulness beyond the frequently used discourse. In the heart of heartfulness, there lies the panacea of compassion, mercy, kindness, and benevolence. Heartfulness calls for exploring a new horizon in humanity, a

horizon that has been less traveled in our era. This horizon looms in view of a flexible encounter with a new set of propositions that do not follow the well-taken-for-granted paradigms in mainstream psychology.

Understanding heartfulness may have some of its own challenges at face value since it might be linked with associations and emotionally ingrained responses that may have developed through the misrepresentation, distortion, and manipulation of transcendental, spiritual, and religious concepts. Extremist viewpoints on spirituality, religiosity, and mysticism may have left a tendency to mostly recall the noxious implications of the effects rather than examining the content and nature of the topic.

I need to mindfully express my gratitude to all those who had an impact on writing this book. My first thanks go to my son, Alisina, who was so encouraging and kind enough to read the book a few times while offering suggestions and insight. His attunement and support were great assets in upholding enthusiasm and fervor. My wife, Saqi, and my daughter, Sana, were patiently helpful during COVID-19 as they brought meaning and power to the pensive silence of reflexivity in the midst of turmoil and tension. My father, Mohammad, deserves special thanks, as his being a bibliophile has been very instrumental in composing great strides in thinking about thinking.

My late mother, Mahvash, to whom I owe an evergreen and eternal thankfulness, has been powerfully vital in espousing the seeds of heartfulness through her compassion and love.

I need to express my gratitude to David Repetto and Emily Watton at Cambridge University Press for their wonderful follow-up with the book project and their lively presence.

CHAPTER I

Peace

> It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is
> invisible to the eye.
>
> Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

When discussing peace in relationships, whether interpersonal, intraper-
sonal, or international, peace is defined as a state of mind, a state of
relationship, and a state of emotions, where tension, pandemonium,
unrest, turmoil, chaos, and turbulence are replaced by tranquility, com-
posure, equanimity, calmness, and serenity.

Some scholarly viewpoints have traced the roots of peace or lack of peace to
the early relationships that a child may experience. This perspective maintains
that right from the beginning of the birth (or even prior to the birth from a
psychoanalytical point of view), a newborn is in need of receiving the gift and
the pearl of connectedness. If the connection and the connectedness occur
and the child experiences a welcoming position and a receiving attitude, he or
she would experience security, trust, tranquility, and assurance as some of the
main constituents of peace. Conversely, if the newborn encounters lack of
understanding, lack of empathy, and lack of attunement, he or she would be
lost in the barren land of despondency, mistrust, fear, anxiety, and doubts,
which may serve as the major elements of creating tension.

What parents do verbally and nonverbally when dealing with a child in
every moment of their interactions can espouse different psychological
imprints in a child. Sensitive, responsive, and available parents pay atten-
tion to a child's needs, presence, and emotional wants and needs for
connection and connectedness. As the beneficiaries of attentive, mindful,
and meticulous attention and caring, careful strategies and approaches,
children may experience the prerequisites of peace. On the other hand,
parents who do not display and put into effect sensitive, available, and
responsive attitudes and actions toward their children or use on-and-off,
yes-and-no positions give rise to children who end up being anxious and
avoidant in their lifestyle and communication patterns.

Thus, the preface of peace, from the attachment style perspective, may begin with early experiences of comfort, trust, support, understanding, empathy, sympathy, intersubjectivity, attunement, and love. The phenomenological experiences of tranquility would open up the doors to lived experiences that may facilitate the process of implementing peace in relationships.

Children who are raised by parents with paradoxical behaviors, condescending responses, invalidating approaches, and suppressive attitudes would most likely carry along the Zeigarnik effect throughout their lives – they can't be at peace with themselves and others since they have unmet needs that may consciously and unconsciously crop up in their interactions. A relationship's liveliness plays a significant role in one's well-being and wellness. The Center on the Developing Child (2020) at Harvard University indicates that children who have been neglected in a relationship may experience more drastically negative consequences and suffer more impairments than children who have been abused.

An attachment perspective on peace would have its main focus on the dynamics of early relationships, construction and manifestation of primordial relationships, the context of primary relationships and their implications for security and support, understanding and trust, insecurity and mistrust, and misunderstanding and fear (Ainsworth, 1982; Bowlby, 1973).

The turmoil of war is devastating, as is the turbulence of a tumultuous relationship. In his report to the World Health Organization (WHO) after World War II, Bowlby indicated that "the infant and young child should experience a warm, intimate and continuous relationship with his mother (or permanent mother substitute) in which both find satisfaction and enjoyment" (1954, p. 13).

The seed of peace is thus sowed in the early interactions of parents and children, which shape the psychological understanding of peace. Loss and separation, insensitivity, unresponsiveness, unavailability, coldness and indifference, and aggression and withdrawal in parent–child relationships would appear to be the impediments of experiencing an integrated, secure self.

A disintegrated, insecure self would be very much alien to the realm of peace. A child's frequent experiences of denial, suppression, repression, negligence, indifference, aggressiveness, loneliness, disconnectedness, despondency, despair, fear, anxiety, confusion, and mistrust would bring him or her a perturbable inner world with vulnerability.

In most of the literature on a secure sense of self, one may see the emphasis and analysis of scholars on the dynamics of early relationships between a child and his or her caregivers. Emotional distance between parents and children and lack of attunement have been

considered as the major factors responsible for maladaptive emotions and psychological problems.

The emphasis here has been laid on the psychological needs. When emotional bids and psychological needs are neglected and ignored or have been aggressively dealt with, the result has appeared in unhealthy relationships in both intrapersonal and interpersonal domains.

Szyf, McGowan, and Meaney (2008, p. 160) highlight the importance of the emotional connection and says that major changes to our bodies can be made not just by chemicals and toxins, but also in the way the social world talks to the hardwired world.

On balance, psychological perspectives have explored and examined the roles of different needs in giving rise to a good sense of self and have built their theories based on the analytical demonstration of the given needs. In other words, numerous psychologists have discussed different needs and have considered some foundational needs as pivotal in espousing tension and unrest within the human psyche. Bowlby (1973) and other object relations theorists have underscored the need for relatedness as the cornerstone of peace and tranquility. Freud (1950) enunciated the maximization of pleasure and minimization of pain as crucial in affecting one's personality. In line with the pleasure principle, Dollard and Miller (1950), along with other scholars focusing on learning theories, have stressed the significance of pleasure and its contribution as a reinforcement in bringing calmness to one's personality. Phenomenological psychologists, including Rogers (1961), have discussed the need to maintain the stability and coherence of a person's conceptual system. Lack of coherence and incongruity have been considered major obstacles for achieving tranquility. Other psychologists, including Allport (1955) and Kohut (1971), have concentrated on the need for self-esteem enhancement.

Any of these psychological perspectives have proceeded with the assumptions that their identified needs within their system of thought can play a huge role in giving rise to human peace and that lack of satisfaction of those needs can play a major role in generating tension and turmoil within the human psyche. Psychopathology has been examined from the perspective of the imbalance among needs. Balance and coherence have been considered important aspects of one's well-being, health, and wellness.

It may be worthwhile to examine other implicitly influential factors that might address the possibility of peace in human life. This includes a hectic, intensive controversy over the analytical account of the mind and behavior

and its diverse modalities that was characterized as the "hot approach versus cold approach" (e.g., see De Jaegher et al., 2010; Zajonc, 1984).

The hot perspective, which goes back to the 1950s and 1960s, was merely interested in the unconscious elements that produced certain types of performance. Thus, any performance, based on the hot perspective, was ultimately embedded within the unconscious interactive process with idiosyncratic emotional, cognitive, and behavioral categories. It was the realization of the hidden, clandestine, cryptic, and latently unconscious elements that contributed to the configuration of specific behavioral manifestation (e.g., see Zajonc, 1984).

An alternative perspective known as the cold approach was inspired by computer-oriented discoveries and focused on the cognitive interplay of the influencing factors of a performance. Focus on the impulsive, unconscious sedimentation of a behavior was here replaced with an interest in the analytical, computational, and serial processing of information and their implications for decision making in a performance. A search for the computational analysis of a performance and its original elements was encouraged in the cold perspective with the intention of identifying the systematic generative constituents of a performance (e.g., see De Jaegher et al., 2010; Rendel et al., 2011).

Both perspectives were challenged by critical approaches that indicated how each of the hot and cold outlooks overlooked some of the significant influential factors of a performance. The result was the combination of both perspectives into what was later called the "warm look" (e.g., see Sorrentino, 2003; Sorrentino & Higgins, 1986).

Dual process theories of social cognition examined two types of information processing that considered both hot and cold perspectives. One led to an effortful, reflective type of thinking, and the other one studied an automatic form of thinking, with both considering each of their implications for behavior and performance (Kruglanski & Orehek, 2007).

On the other hand, in his letter to Albert Einstein and in the body of his other writings, Freud adopts a deterministic view on human beings and proclaims the impossibility of peace; violence is ineluctably tied to human nature and human life (Freud, 1932, 1950, 1962).

Freud is not alone in proclaiming the impossibility of peace. The evolutionist camp to which he is adhering entails other thinkers who believe in the survival of the fittest through natural selection, and they comply with Freud's notion that peace is nothing but wishful thinking (Wilson, 1978). In one of his assertions, Freud (1918) says, "I have found

little that is 'good' about human beings on the whole. In my experience most of them are trash."

Benito Mussolini was also on the same page when he said, "War is to man what maternity is to a woman. From a philosophical and doctrinal viewpoint, I do not believe in perpetual peace."

The war-stricken perspective is strongly embedded within a biological doctrine where aggression and violence are considered to be inextricably interwoven with the human system of life, human beings' general dispositions, and human beings' genetic predilections.

In compliance with Thomas Hobbes in reiterating that man is a wolf to man, Huntington posits that "it is human to hate" (1996, p. 130).

Adopting a political stance in explaining the human civilizations, Huntington turns down the possibility of peace, trust, and friendship and indicates that "cold peace, cold war, trade war, quasi war, uneasy peace, troubled relations, intense rivalry, competitive coexistence, arms races . . . are the most probable descriptions of relations between entities from different civilizations. Trust and friendship will be rare" (Huntington, 1996, p. 207).

The instinctual intensity of supremacy and power, the tyranny of biological determinism, and the strong desire to control may lead to the unquestionability of the impossible peace. The universality of war, the impossibility of peace, and the unquestionability of conflicts and turmoil are postulated in doctrines that ultimately deny the plausibility of implementing genuine peace in any form of relationships. On balance, one may discuss two paradoxical perspectives on peace: one that considers peace as an attainable goal and one that negates the possibility of establishing peace.

A Darwinian outlook has a focus on power and superiority. If existence is supposed to be run by the survival of the fittest and the key to success is to seek power and control, there would be an intrinsically emergent predilection toward hegemony. The ontological exegesis of domination in a Darwinian context would prescribe serious and strenuous attempts to secure power. The focus on domineering wealth and resources would give rise to a mentality of conflict, competitiveness, possessiveness, superiority, and polarization where you are either superior or inferior.

Exploring the nature of peace and its implications in sundry domains of human life including intrapersonal, interpersonal, and international relationships would ultimately lead us toward some vital questions, including the nature of humanness, the relationship between the inner world and the outer world, the defining components of human beings, the essence of peace in terms of its existential meaning, and other relevant questions and issues.

chapter 2

The Western Approach toward Inner Peace

The mainstream Western perspective on peace may be reflected in sundry therapeutic schools of thought that focus on emotional, cognitive, and behavioral conflicts within human beings. The premise of these various viewpoints may have one common denominator: their interpretive angle on human beings as characterized in the material realm. In other words, the majority of these perspectives define human beings in the context of the material, tangible, and objective realities, considering no other dimensions. As human beings are embedded in the material realm, any curative attempt needs to be addressed, organized, and conceptualized within the material domain of human beings.

The movement in the 1940s and 1950s may be associated with a predilection toward a search in the unconscious world to find out what may cause the conflicts in the human world. The conflict among the id, ego, and superego; the emergence of the unconscious defense mechanism; the analysis of discontentment in civilizations; and the psychosexual developments in Freudian psychoanalysis may reveal one of many existing worldviews on human beings with a materialist concentration.

Freud's conceptualization of human beings is ultimately shaped by a system of thought wherein determinism supersedes human choices and the ideal possibility lies in an attainable management that, at its best, bridles human destructive instincts. Nonetheless, going beyond biological and psychological determinism is not conceivable. In discussing the nature of human beings, Freud (1918) says, "I have found little that is 'good' about human beings on the whole. In my experience most of them are trash." The conflicts between social and biological forces are inextricably tied to human nature in Freudian psychoanalysis. Such conflict in human inner forces may bring about destructiveness on both interpersonal and intrapersonal levels and thus may espouse complicated demolishing effects in the outside world, including war, genocide, massacre, and terrorism.

9

The psychoanalytical perspective is in pursuit of understanding the mystery behind the unconscious forces and their motivating power in shaping and changing realities. Freud's attempt is to explain the mechanism of destructiveness in the human realm through a deep search within the human psyche and its surreptitious and clandestine sources in creating conflicts and pandemonium. In his letter to Albert Einstein, Freud writes,

> Conflicts of interest between man and man are resolved, in principle, by the recourse to violence. It is the same in the animal kingdom, from which man cannot claim exclusion; nevertheless, men are also prone to conflicts of opinion, touching, on occasion, the loftiest peaks of abstract thought, which seem to call for settlement by quite another method. This refinement is, however, a late development. To start with, group force was the factor which, in small communities, decided points of ownership and the question which man's will was to prevail. Very soon physical force was implemented, then replaced, by the use of various adjuncts; he proved the victor whose weapon was the better, or handled the more skillfully. Now, for the first time, with the coming of weapons, superior brains began to oust brute force, but the object of the conflict remained the same: one party was to be constrained, by the injury done him or impairment of his strength, to retract a claim or a refusal. This end is most effectively gained when the opponent is definitely put out of action – in other words, is killed. This procedure has two advantages: the enemy cannot renew hostilities, and, secondly, his fate deters others from following his example. Moreover, the slaughter of a foe gratifies an instinctive craving.... However, another consideration may be set off against this will to kill: the possibility of using an enemy for servile tasks if his spirit be broken and his life spared. Here violence finds an outlet not in slaughter but in subjugation. Hence springs the practice of giving quarter; but the victor, having from now on to reckon with the craving for revenge that rankles in his victim, forfeits to some extent his personal security.

The psychoanalytical perspective led by Freud does not conceive of any reality except the materially embedded representations that are of an objective, visible, and tangible quiddity. For Freud, God is merely a demonstration of a longing for a protective father figure who provides comfort and security for people embroiled in anxiety and fear. In his book *The Future of an Illusion*, Freud dismisses the truth of God and considers it a collective neurosis.

Along with the psychoanalytical perspective on human nature and its emphasis on the materialistic essence of human beings, similar emergent viewpoints on human nature in the Western world have underlined the search for human peace in connection with the relationships between thoughts, feelings, and behaviors and their synchronicity and congruence.