

*As you go, proclaim the good news, The kingdom of heaven has come near. Matthew 10:7*

It is easy to be pleasant to people when they treat us well. The real test is how do we behave toward them when they have mistreated us? Think of a time when you believe you have been truly wronged. Maybe someone stole something, lied about you, cheated on you or spoke abusively to you. When these things happen, it is easy to feel hurt, sad or mad. These feelings and impulses are normal. But what happens if you get caught up in reactions and go nuclear? Bad or difficult situations usually follow.

As the Buddha said long ago, *Getting angry with another person is like throwing hot coals with bare hands: both people get burned.* Gandhi put it so well when he said *An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind.*

Here are some alternatives you can use to keep from going nuclear when you feel like you have been mistreated:

*Pause.* Rarely do we get into trouble for what we do not say or do. Take a few deep breaths and a few seconds to focus yourself before responding.

*Practice Non-Contention.* Do not argue unless it is absolutely necessary.

*Inspect the Underlying Trigger.* Look at the situation realistically. Were you really injured? Put what happened in proper perspective.

*Accept the Wound.* Experience the bad feelings of the wound. Know that sometimes things hurt. Sometimes people will hurt or disappoint us.

*Realize that Some People will not get the Lesson.* So why burden yourself with trying to teach them?

*Resolve to meet mistreatment with loving kindness.* No matter what. Consider the saying: In this world, hate has never dispelled hate. Only love dispels hate.

When people mistreat us, we need to clarify our position, stand up for ourselves, set boundaries, and respond in powerful life-affirming ways. The art is to do these things without the fiery excesses that have harmful consequences for us, others, and our fragile planet.

Jesus said *The kingdom of heaven is at hand.* Unity teaches that the kingdom of heaven is a condition of mind or a state of consciousness. Jesus never taught that heaven was some distant realm. Today's Daily Word says it beautifully:

*Cradling a sleeping child; sharing an evening with close friends; praying at the edge of the ocean. I enter into heavenly consciousness each moment I am at peace and one with God. During these moments I experience true oneness. There is no sense of separation between myself and others, between myself and the world. I breathe and relax into the wonder of God's love and peace. Right where I am now, I am fully immersed in Spirit.*

*Gratefully I acknowledge this heavenly expression is a part of my earthly experience. Allowing my mind to merge into the One Mind of pure love, dissolving my being into the depths of infinite possibilities, this is heaven on earth.*

*Affirmation: Immersed in God's Love, I experience heaven on earth.*