

## Inner State Crumbles United States

Suna Senman

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America is striving to build a more peacefully prosperous society by digging into the foundation of our ground structure. Health care is a part of that soil, along with economics, education and other areas. Individuals who we elected to be legislators and leaders are spearheading the new structure. As in the renovation of a home, the outcome becomes an expression of the individual designers. The government shutdown is an expression of the inner constipation, conflict and imbalance in the individuals involved. Individual leaders need inner peace to bring the external compromise and harmony required to build the new flourishing America.

As Congress and the presidency are reforming the establishment, hidden boulders, underground streams and other surprises are revealed. Public policy is personal in that the political structures are built of the bricks of individuals with their inner world manifesting outwardly. The group shift of establishing new policy reveals inner flexibility (or the current inflexibility.) Personal responsibility is the underpinning of public authority. "Forgive yourself to have peace with yourself. Then forgive others," advises Joy Ogwa, Nigerian UN representative and moderator of the UN High level forum on the Cultural of Peace Panel Discussion II in September. All citizens of the earth are responsible for the state of humanity including leaders and individuals, like Miriam Carey, the deceased young mother who allegedly tried to charge onto the White House property. As we excavate the ground of our current state, one spade at a time, we find hardened concepts, streams of beliefs and "gifts" of other people's attitudes that drive our daily life condition. A peaceful society begins when we let go of the obstacles to both inner and outer balance.

Political reconstruction begins with internal unearthing. Each person behooves conscious proactive searching through practices such as meditation, prayer or coaching.

"Prayer impacts our spiritual practice at three levels: action, thought and attitude" reports the Spiritual Science Research Foundation.

"Coaching helps people build a much broader perspective so they get to understand where someone else is coming from," life coach Chrissy Carew, author of *Insightful Player* explains. Often times, daily life uncovers blocks to inner peace. Conflicts such as the standoff leading to the US government shutdown on Oct. 1, 2013, bring hardened misconceptions to the surface. Elements such as: placing the desires of a few over the needs of the whole, grasping for personal power, feeling "right" and regarding others as "wrong" all act like boulders in groundbreaking for peace, the harmonious flow of growth.

"Pride can lead to grudge-holding and selfishness, making the relationship about 'me,' instead of 'us,'" says perceptive comedian, Lawrence Owens as he explains common human conflict. Each person involved in the face-off, including each one of us who has an opinion on the situation, has the opportunity and responsibility to find our personal blocks that contribute to the dysfunctional circumstances. Perhaps we need to take our "pride temperature" when conflicts get hot.

Sometimes a stream of thought, like a political concept, can interfere with the construction of peace. Streams flowing through the foundation of a building will eventually bring the building down. A contractor, understanding the power of a constant water flow, constructs an alternate path for the stream, and then protects his foundation with a waterproof barrier. Our nation's leader should engineer a path for the far right political stream with respect for the thoughts to flow while protecting the growth of a peacefully prospering society. The conflict between water flow, earth and concrete requires each side to adjust. Thoughts can be seen as water; earth, as the current situation; and concrete, representing the desired future state. They work together to create a new shape. "We need to redefine community and find a variety of ways of coming together and helping each other," guides leading Buddhist meditation teacher and New York Times best-selling author Sharon Salzberg. Constructing a better society begins within individuals, as they expand their true human expression, and then assembles to shape a community.

The new millennium world requests an evolution of old configurations. Each individual plays his or her part to bring inner peace outward into the society at large. Currently, inner turmoil is oozing into the world through the bitter fight by individuals in leadership positions such as Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas, House Speaker John Boehner, Senate leader Mitch McConnell and President Barack Obama. A genuine peacemaker lives peace now, opposed to "fighting" for future peace, because peace is an active current choice. The active choice is to respect one another, value the opinion of others as you value your own, and use conflict to create the better outcome from the collective than what individuals or small groups could do alone. US leadership is currently modeling their love of fight over their hope for the prosperity of peace.

Each player in the US government shutdown needs to take his or her "pride temperature" and take an aspirin of inner reflection on core values. Especially as a leader, your inner state impacts the global state. Everything begins with the responsibility that you take as an individual. Verbal promises to create a better society are negated with this backward behavior until you can demonstrate peace in action through mutual respect.