



Comparisons Across Religions



Overview

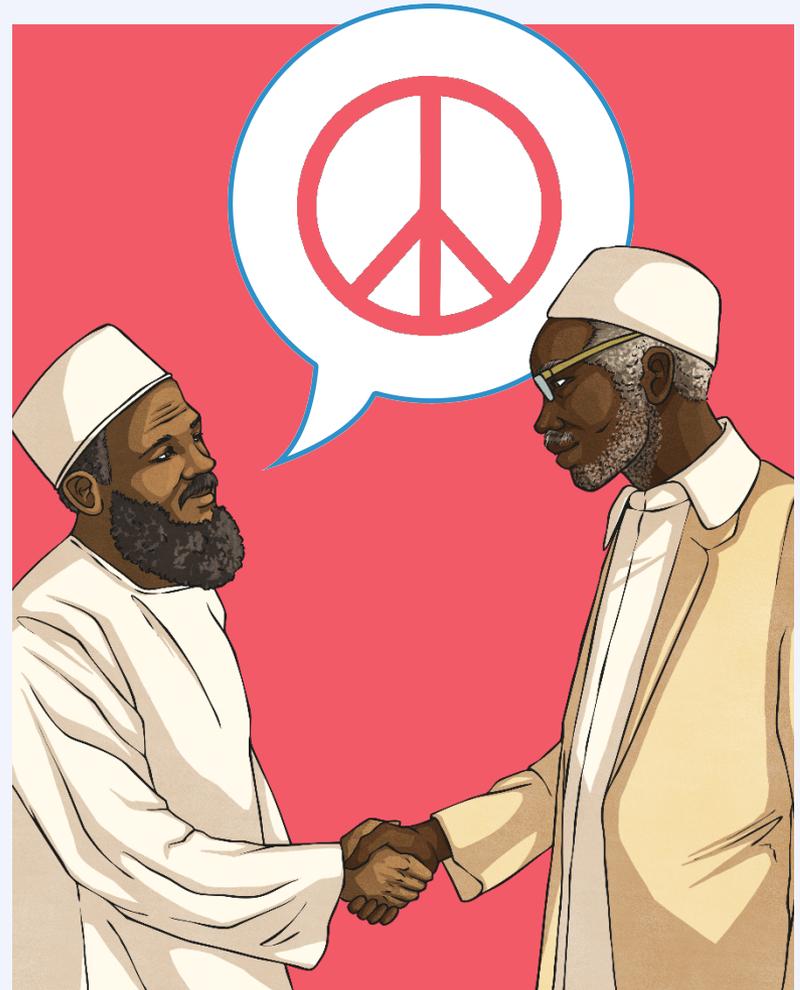
All religions maintain that peacemakers are the children of the Almighty.

Peace is a way of drawing together people, communities and nations into an everlasting friendship.

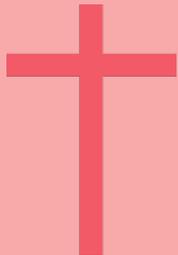
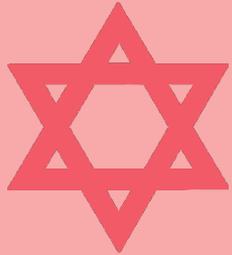
It is the absence of anger and malice, and the presence of compassion and forgiveness that will bind people into unity.

However, there are some key differences between religious views on peace, as well as some key similarities.

Today's lesson will look into some of those differences and similarities.



Western Religions



Western religions (Christianity, Judaism and Islam) have a focus on peace within their community.

This peace includes peace within the family unit, local community, national community and international community.

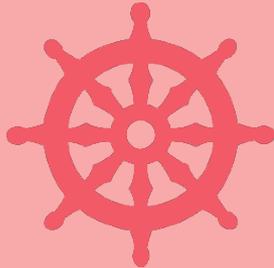
These religions also focus on positive actions within the community to install peace.

These religions all believe in world peace being brought by the arrival of a significant person.

Christianity, Judaism and Islam all use prayer as a means to install peace within each individual and focus on peace within the community.

Christians, Jews and Muslims all support holy wars (a war declared or waged in support of a religious cause).

Eastern Religions



Eastern religions (Sikhism, Buddhism and Hinduism) all have a focus on inner peace.

Sikhs, Buddhists and Hindus all believe in meditation as a way of bringing about inner peace.

These religions believe in being both mentally and spiritually at peace.

Inner peace is achieved through various forms including: meditation, tai-chi, yoga and prayer.

All these forms are focused on bringing individual peace.

Tenzin Gyatso (the 14th Dalai Lama, the spiritual head of Tibetan Buddhism) stated:

‘The question of real, lasting world peace concerns human beings, so basic human feelings are also at its roots.

Through inner peace, genuine world peace can be achieved.

In this the importance of individual responsibility is quite clear; an atmosphere of peace must first be created

within ourselves, then

gradually expanded to include our families, our communities, and ultimately the whole

planet.’



Inner Peace

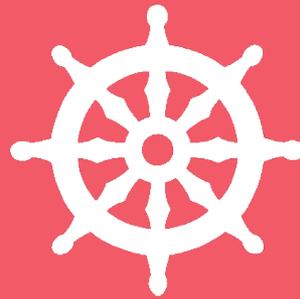


Peace

The religions that focus on inner peace are Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism.



Hinduism – Hindus use prayer, yoga and meditation to find inner peace and escape the stresses of everyday life.



Buddhism – Buddhism teaches the use of meditations. Buddhists also use prayer to find inner peace. [This Meditation Video Clip](#) explains meditation in Buddhism.



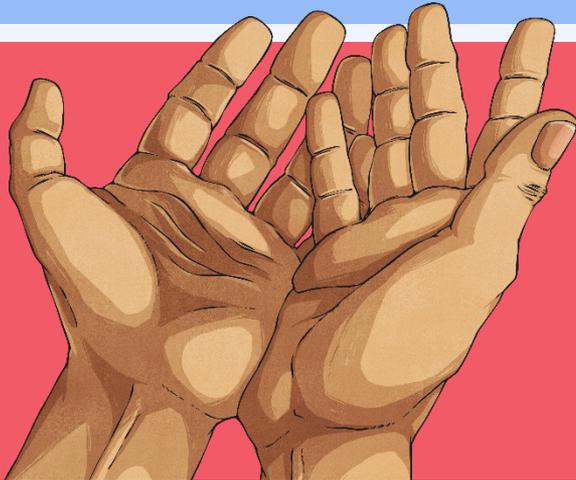
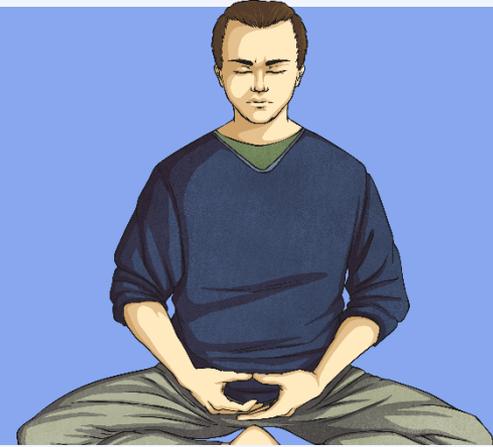
Sikhism – Sikhs use prayer and meditation to find inner peace through devotional prayer.

Many religious and non religious people seek finding inner peace through meditation, yoga and tai chi.

Techniques

The following techniques are used to find inner peace:

Meditation – The definition of meditation is: ‘Focus one’s mind for a period of time, in silence or with the aid of chanting, for religious or spiritual purposes or as a method of relaxation’ (Taken from the Oxford Dictionary). People who meditate do so in order to gain inner peace, relaxation and/or spiritual growth.

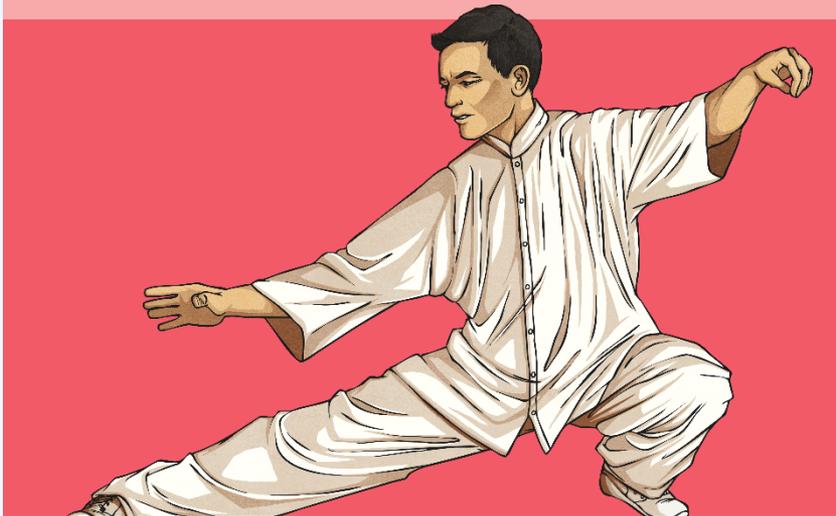


Prayer – Many religions use communal prayer (where people prayer together) and individual prayer. They use these forms of prayer to say sorry, to say thank you or to say please. These prayers help individual’s focus and gain inner peace in the process.

Techniques

The following techniques are used to find inner peace:

Tai Chi – Tai Chi is an internal Chinese martial art. It is used for many purposes and one of the purposes is to gain inner peace. It is heavily focused on controlled body movements and breathing and this focus enables inner peace and tranquillity.



Yoga – Yoga is a Hindu discipline involving controlled breathing, specific body positions and meditation in order to obtain spiritual growth, tranquillity and inner peace.



Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a technique with similarities to Buddhist meditation.

Mindfulness involved being aware of your own experience from a first person perspective.

Mindfulness is used as a technique to improve mental health and promote wellbeing.

It is a technique used to find inner peace.

Being mindful is about paying attention to the present moment, clearing your mind of distractions and focusing on simply being.

Nearly any activity, done right, can be an exercise in mindfulness – walking down the street, eating a piece of chocolate, or simply breathing in and out.

However, the act of colouring in – carefully and attentively filling a page with colour, the feel of the pencil in your hand as you meditate on the beauty of the whole illustration – is particularly suited to mindful meditation.



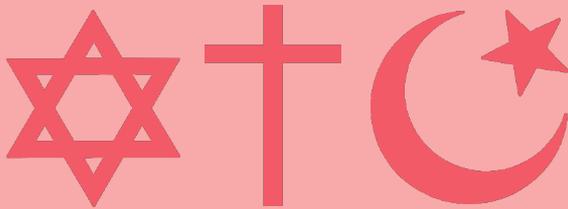


Community Cohesion



Western Religions

The western religions (Christianity, Judaism and Islam) believe that peace is brought about by an emphasis on peace in the community.



Peace within communities is also referred to as community cohesion.

Lots of western religions work alongside charities within the community to promote cohesion.

This community could range from your immediate community (your family/your school) to the international community (how countries get along with each other).



Community Cohesion

“A cohesive community is one where:

- There is common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities;
- The diversity of people’s different backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and positively valued;
- Those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities; and
- Strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.” -- Local Government Association et al, 2002

Western religions are involved in finding and promoting peace in their communities through community cohesion and working closely with other faiths.

