

Anchors for Peace & Hope

These are a few peaceful, hopeful nuggets I assembled for an October 2025 Zoom talk;

Please contact me at Paul@TheRipplesGuy.com if I missed anything or if you have questions or feedback. 🕒 -pw

PEBBLES (a resource I've been using)

Tues.: [Jane's Famous Last Words](#) (Netflix Series):

"I was sent to this world to try to give people hope in dark times, because without hope we fall into apathy and do nothing.... How can we bring little children into this dark world we've created and let them be surrounded by people who have given up?"

~Jane Goodall (1934-2025)

Thu. [Friends of Silence](#)

a non-profit endeavor reverencing silence

"Sometimes, in this troubled world of ours, we forget that love is all around us. We imagine the worst of other people and withdraw into our own shells. But try this simple test: Stand still in any crowded place and watch the people around you. Within a very short time, you will begin to see love, and you will see it over and over and over. A young mother talking to her child, a couple laughing together as they walk by, an older man holding the door for a stranger — small signs of love are everywhere. The more you look, the more you will see. Love is literally everywhere. We are surrounded by love."

~Steven Charleston, [10/29/25 daily quote](#)

BOULDERS (an activity I've found useful)

Tue: [Talking to Strangers](#)

Several studies have shown that brief social interactions with strangers can make us happier and increase our sense of belonging. In a 2014 study, researchers at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business asked people to talk to strangers on the train. Many thought that their fellow commuters wouldn't be open to conversation. But in the experiment, both parties felt more positive after interacting with each other.

Thu: Reverse Ripples: A Gratitude Backtrail Practice

(inspired by a 10/25/25 NYT column by Melissa Kirsch, shared by Sara in Madison, WI)

Begin with one small joy you're grateful for. Then follow its ripples backward—through the people, choices, and chance moments that made it possible—like tracing a stream to its quiet source. Watch how one thank-you swells into a widening tide of wonder.

1. Choose one specific thing you're feeling grateful for right now.
2. Ask, "What made this possible?" Name the person, event, or choice behind it.
3. Ask again. Keep stepping back 3-7 links.
4. Finish by savoring the whole river of gratitude.
5. BONUS STEP: send a quick thanks to someone for their particular ripple.

Today I'm grateful for _____. It reached me because _____, which happened because _____, which traces back to _____. Thank you, everyone and everything along the way."

PONDER (Uncle Paul's Anchors for Peace & Hope)

1. WE GOT THIS. I thought it was true back in March 2020 when we dreamed up the blue-hearted sticker in the first few days of the pandemic, and I think it is still true today: WE GOT THIS if we come together with Curious Minds, Open Hearts, and Calm Spirits while we Nurture Health. [See Nugget #1](#)
2. Judgments extinguish curiosity, and they prevent us from accurately seeing what is happening around us. If you're frustrated that people don't seem to be doing anything or doing enough, remember: they may be in denial, they may be stuck; they may be taking action that isn't visible to you; they may be lost; they may be confused. They may be doing the best they can. They are doing the best they can. (Remember that denial, despair and anger are not only big feels, they are also stages of grief.) [See Nugget #2](#)
3. Anger is not a bad thing; just remember the difference between rage and fury (see page 74 of Ripples of Hope) [See Nugget #3](#)
4. The Opposite of Hate is connection. ([The Opposite of Hate](#): A Field Guide to Repairing Humanity by Sally Kohn). [See Nugget #4](#)
5. There is goodness and golems on both sides. ([What's our problem?](#) a self-help book for societies by Tim Urban) [See Nugget #5](#)
6. The foundation of Outer Peace is Inner Peace (my conclusion after reading [The Anatomy of Peace](#)) See [Nugget #6](#)
7. Active Hope is more sustainable when we're able to zoom out and see the big picture and the Big Timeline. (inspired by [Active Hope](#)) [See Nugget #7](#)

8. Clear-eyed hope is always better than despair. Always. (inspired by [How to Be an Antiracist, by Ibram X. Kendi](#)) [See Nugget #8](#)

Books

- [Active Hope](#): How to Face the Mess We're in Without Going Crazy, by Chris Johnstone and Joanna Macy
- [The Anatomy of Peace](#): Resolving the Heart of Conflict by The Arbinger Institute
- [The Opposite of Hate](#): A Field Guide to Repairing Humanity by Sally Kohn
- [What's our Problem?](#) A self-help book for societies by Tim Urban

[The Ripples Podcast](#)

These are episodes that dig deeper into some of the things we touched on:

- Episode 86: [A Heart at Peace in a World of Conflict](#) conversation with Coach Roach Finley about the book "The Anatomy of Peace"
- Episode 81: [Three Hopes for Hard Times](#) slow hope, resilient hope, and active hope
- Episode 80: [A Resilience Refresh](#) reviewing the four pillars from our "We Got This" Sticker
- Episode 72: [Why Can't We Get Along?](#) exploring ideas and [resources](#) around the toxic polarization that has infected our politics and our society
- Episode 59: [To Me, By Me, Thru Me, As Me](#)

Nugget #1: We Got This!



If you need a sticker, you can get one [here](#).

Nugget #2: Remedies for Division

Too often humanity sees difference as danger;
we judge before we understand.
But Grace whispers, "Wait,"
and Curiosity asks, "Why."

Imagine if instead of saying,
"You are not like me,"
we asked, "What can I learn from you?" or
"What light do you carry that I do not?"

And maybe, just maybe
on the other side of that question mark
is the answer,
right there waiting for everyone.

Grace makes space.
Curiosity leans in.

Together they can carry us toward one another.
Grace and curiosity are not luxuries...they are
remedies.

Remedies for division which there's so much of in
the world right now.

~Pharrell Williams' [opening remarks during Grace for the World concert](#), shared by Sally in Nebraska

Nugget #3: Anger vs. Fury

ANGER

Anger, in the right amount, fuels action. Remember though that too much anger can burn—both us and others. I have a color code for the destructive and the helpful kinds of anger: Red is for rage that burns destructively because it flares up and out of control. Blue is for fury that throws a flame like a blowtorch: if handled with caution it has the potential to be constructive and weld things together.

Be aware of the color of your anger. It's important that you find a way to recognize which anger you're experiencing and then channel it in as helpful a way as possible.



p. 74, Ripples of Hope: Wisdom for Navigating Uncertainty

Nugget #5

Your attention is basically a currency. And what you spend it on matters. You can spend it on outrage, and the world feels angrier. You can spend it on kindness, and the world feels a little softer. The thing is, you only have so much to spend, right? It's a finite resource, so what will you spend your attention on today?

~Steve Burns, [Alive with Steve Burns: Keeping It Unapologetically Real](#)

Nugget #6

Peace Is A Verb

by Maryam Bukar Hassan, UN Global Advocate
for Peace, (see her read it [here](#))

I used to think that peace was a place,
a final destination we arrive at
after all wars have ended.
But I have come to understand
that peace is not a line we cross.
It is a choice we make
over and over and over again.
Especially when it is the hardest,
especially when it feels far away.

Peace is not a silence
you force into people's mouths.
It is not the absence of war,
but the presence of understanding.
Peace is a child learning to sleep again
without flinching at the wind.
It is a mother not having to choose between
bread and dignity.
It is a father not having to swallow his voice to feel
like a man.
Peace is messy.
Like forgiveness, it does not arrive in parade
floats.
Sometimes it comes crawling through broken
windows
when we finally agree that being right is not
better than being home.

Peace is not found,
it is built brick by brutal brick by hands that once
knew how to fight
now choose to hold instead.
There was a time when we measured strength
by how long we could hold a grudge.
But now let us measure strength
by how long we could hold space for someone
else's truth.

Because there was a me and a you before there
was ever an us.

And if us is broken,
then peace is what lets us lay down the shards
without aiming at each other's throats.

Peace is the poem you write
after the war in your chest
has finally run out of ink.
It is the moment you return to your body
and find it still standing.
Peace is not loud.
It does not always sing.
Sometimes it just listens.
And sometimes that is the loudest love of all.

And let us not forget those who have carried
peace quietly through the fire.
The women whose hands mend what war has
torn.
Who rebuild homes from memories.
Raise children between checkpoints.
Hold their families like nations.
Because peace has always known the name of a
woman
spoken through the way she chooses courage
over collapse again and again.

And so today I speak peace
into the bones of this world,
into the rubble,
into the rage,
into the ruins.

Because if war teaches us how to shutter,
then peace must teach us how to stay.
To stay soft,
to stay human,
to stay.

~Maryam Bukar Hassan, shared by Rachel in PA

Nugget #4

Force of Peace (by John Roedel)

I can't make the world be peaceful
I can't stall tanks from roaring down roads
I can't prevent children from having to hide in bunkers
I can't convince the news to stop turning war into a video game
I can't silence the sound of bombs tearing neighborhoods apart
I can't turn a guided missile into a bouquet of flowers
I can't make a warmonger have an ounce of empathy
I can't convince diplomats to quit playing truth or dare
I can't deflect a sniper's bullet from turning a wife into a widow
I can't stave off a schoolyard being reduced to ash and rubble
I can't do any of that.

The only thing I can do
is love the next person I encounter
without any conditions or strings

to love my neighbor
so fearlessly that
it starts a ripple
that stretches from
one horizon to the next.

I can't force peace on the world
but I can become a force of peace in the world

because sometimes all it takes
is a single lit candle in the darkness
to start a movement

oh, Spirit,
let me be a candle of comfort in this world
let me burn with peace.

~john roedel
[posted on facebook](#) June 13, 2025

Nugget #7 Getting Saved

"No one is coming to save you."

I disagree! I believe many people made up of many small moments come to save pieces of you, even if just briefly:
The mentor who believed in you.
The friend who said they're proud of you.
The family member that makes you laugh.
The random person who held the door for you out of nothing but kindness.
The teacher who took extra time to help you understand.
The person who smiled at you when you walked into a store.
The little kid who looks up to you.
The person who randomly complimented you.

Being "saved" isn't about being whisked away and all your hardships gone...

It's about the people and things that remind you life is not all hardships.

it is kindness, love, gentleness, softness, care, thoughtfulness.

It is many moments made up of your lifetime that keeps you going and showing you the world is still beautiful, and will always be.

Despite. Despite. Despite.
~original source unknown, shared by Shannon at NWTC via a student who text it to her

Nugget #8

If you only carry one thing
throughout your entire life,
let it be hope.

Let it be hope that better things are always ahead.

Let it be hope that you can get through even the
toughest of times.

Let it be hope that you are stronger than any
challenge that comes your way.

Let it be hope that you are exactly where you are
meant to be right now, and that you are on the
path to where you are meant to be...

Because during these times,
hope will be the very thing that carries you
through.

- Nikki Banas, texted to me by MJ in NJ

In my urgency to clutch it,
I made peace a thing to be protected,
like a jewel, like a token,
instead of a force that transforms.

What if I let peace sweep through me
as branches are cleared by wind?

What if I let peace flood me,
scouring what I thought I knew?

What if, no matter how hard I tried to
capture it,

peace slipped through my grasp like mist,
like rain, like time?

If I trusted an ever present peace as much as I
trust| ever present chaos, who would I be then?

*~Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer, shared by Teri in
California*