

“I Want to Change”

What People Really Mean

What do people really mean when they say - *I want to ... save the whales, save the rainforest, save the planet, stop global warming, free Tibet or save the people in Darfur?* Are they saying anything different from people saying - *I want to change the world to be a better place, or I am waiting for the world to change?*

These are all noble statements, but they all suggest that *the real problems are somewhere out there and all the solutions are somewhere out there too.* None of these statements require the speaker to look inside at themselves. The focus is always on solving other people’s problems without seeing and solving our own problems.

We like to focus on the problems like Darfur and Tibet so that we don’t have to focus on the problems that we have at home, such as the overcrowding in our educational and prison systems, race, unemployment, ... We talk about global warming yet we don’t address how our public policies, energy intensive lifestyles, carbon emissions and other actions have contributed to global warming. By focusing on the problems outside of our country, we don’t have to see our involvement in creating the problem and having to make real change. When people say that they want to change, most of them are talking about changing the situation or circumstances. They are not talking about real change.

If we are truly concern about global warming and wish to do something about it we should focus on ourselves. We should focus on using more public transportation, buying locally produced goods, eating less processed foods, and using products that have a small carbon footprint. We would be demanding from our government the immediate implementation and enforcement of laws that would immediately reduce carbon emissions by 90% within the first 5 years. We would use less energy (e.g., oil, paper products, plastic products, etc. If we are reluctant to take such drastic

actions, then what we are really saying is that we want *to do the right thing*, but we really *don't want to sacrifice or suffer too much of an inconvenience* for the cause.

The truth is that humans are an integral part of this planet. This planet has given us birth and has provided for all of our needs. It's the only home that we have ever known. If we are really serious about protecting our planet and our human existence, then we should focus on making real change. Real change begins within each and every one of us. It's your planet. It's your choice.

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