



Domination, “God,” and Savior-hood



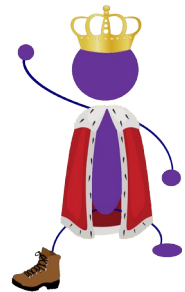
Alova

Abstract: Human beings have been dominated in countless ways for millennia. Depending on circumstances, domination can be necessary, beneficial, cruel, or even evil. Compassionate by nature and holding love as an ideal, some people nevertheless imagine that our Source simultaneously oppresses us and saves us from oppression. A loving Creator would offer many lifebuoys to lift humanity out of domination. In fact, many forms of savior-hood are available to us—and a perpetual one.

1. Humanity and Domination

Human beings do not like to be dominated. We rebel against it—in childhood, in youth, in adulthood, in old age. We have an innate sense that we want and have a right to make our own choices. No one wants to be a zombie, mindless and choiceless, controlled like a robot. If all our choices were made by someone else, what would be the purpose of human life?

Yet we are dominated on every front, at every turn, and humans have apparently been dominated for thousands of years. We are ruled, from cradle to grave. It seems that this is just the way life is and there is no alternative. How did this happen, since human beings don't like it? Is it natural? Did domination seep into our every social structure by a natural, organic process?



Animals dominate when necessary. Lions subdue deer, spiders subdue insects, and elk subdue rivals in order to eat, protect themselves, reproduce, and survive. Individual animals also dominate others within their own groups. Domination is part of the natural order.



Domination implies “**power-over;**” using power of force over something else,. “Being in one's own power” does not imply that one dominates anything or anyone else. Domination is characterized by force, overruling the will of another.

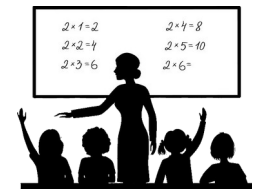
If people are either unwilling or unable to control their behavior and refrain from physically damaging people or property, they need to be dominated until they are willing and able to control themselves. The question, however, is when and how to dominate them.

We don't have the right to force other people to change their behavior unless they are doing harm. Encouraging other people to **decide** to change can be helpful, but trying to change someone by force is dominating. It is not loving unless the person is doing harm to others. Besides, it doesn't work very well. We usually don't have the power to change other people's behavior.

Submission is not always unpleasant, and can be voluntary. We might join a company under the direction of a boss, an orchestra under the direction of a conductor, a military under the command of officers, or a sports team under the direction of coach and captain. These situations are for a particular purpose and a limited time, and we are not violated because we choose them. A greater, collective goal is reached that benefits many.



We also submit to others when we lack knowledge, ability or experience, or when we are learning from an expert. Again, this is for a limited time and purpose, and there is very good reason for our submission—safety, knowledge, wisdom—benefits that could not be achieved otherwise.

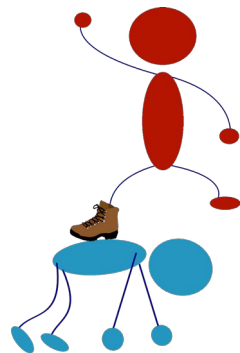


When we are dominated in a limited way by our own choice, we can unvolunteer whenever we want. Our own will is not usurped.

We humans know we are not at the pinnacle of knowledge, love, wisdom, or power, so many of us submit to the God of our belief. We grow in the direction of whatever we admire or worship, and when we voluntarily submit to Goodness, we become better people in a better society.

We feel violated when we are forced, but not when we are persuaded. If someone convinces us to do what they want, with honest rationale and without manipulation, then we choose freely and we are not forced or deceived.

Most people think they know what everyone else should do and how other people should run their lives—but they don't realize that everyone else thinks like this too! Billions of people think we should do things their way. Although most people want to control others and limit other people's choices, they don't want to be controlled or have their own choices limited.

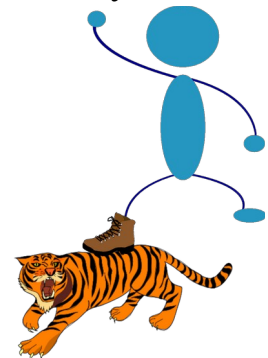


Government is force: some people forcing other people to do, or not do, certain things. Legislation and politics are all about power, domination and control. Some people use that power to dominate selfishly, greedily, unnecessarily, or foolishly; very few people restrain their use of that power to when it is really necessary to ensure the wellness and survival of a community.

Human beings have the ability and intelligence to subdue other creatures. However, having power does not mean that it is just fine to use it however we please, to dominate anyone or anything. **Human beings have the ability to discern and to use our power morally or immorally.**

Every ability carries a duty to use it responsibly for beneficial purposes including to survive and protect, and to refrain from doing unnecessary harm. Using our abilities to dominate people, animals and the Earth can be necessary in some circumstances, beneficial in others, or extremely harmful.

If a tiger attempts to kill our family, we should dominate and subdue it. If other humans invade our region and threaten to harm us, we should dominate and subdue them too. If an unseen force or group attempts to control our minds or implant thought, emotion or memory, we should assume full control of our own minds and refuse to be dominated.



Dominating is good when it is necessary for life and self-defense.

When someone submits voluntarily, without deceit or manipulation, and maintains the choice to leave, or when someone lacks necessary knowledge, experience, or competence, domination can be good and beneficial.

Except in these circumstances, dominating others is immoral and uncivil. This includes domination by a majority, known as “democracy.” Majority rule is not a spiritual principle. The universe would collapse in short order if it were ruled by majority.

Domination without just cause is at the very core of what we call “evil.”¹

2. Domination and Compassion

Human beings are naturally compassionate. Compassion is a measure of humaneness, of civility, and of our maturity as a species.

Archaeological research shows that two million years ago, early *Homo* species cared for the chronically ill for years, and buried their dead with care. Later Neanderthals had compassionate, effective, widespread health care. They were committed to caring for one another long-term, including those who were ill or injured. Evidence suggests that **compassion and care for the injured may have helped human races to survive.**²

1 See *Bad and Evil*, Part 4 Evil, p. 9-10 or video 4, https://wisdom2joy.com/Bad_and_Evil.

2 P. Spikins, *How Compassion Made Us Human: The Evolutionary Origins of Tenderness, Trust and Morality* (2015, Barnsley: Pen and Sword). Penny Spikins, Holly Rutherford and Andy Needham, “The Prehistory of Compassion” (2010), https://www.academia.edu/462006/The_Prehistory_of_Compassion; “From Homininity to Humanity: Compassion from the Earliest Archaics to Modern Humans,” *Time and Mind: The Journal of Archaeology, Consciousness and Culture* (2010) 3(3):303–325, https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/129887/1/The_Prehistory_of_Compassion_OA_Images.pdf. *Neuroscience News*, <https://neurosciencenews.com/compassion-evolution-neanderthals-8632>.

In more recent history, compassion has increased and brutality has decreased significantly. Although horrible cruelty still exists, and war itself is always cruel, humanity overall has become far more humane. People generally have less tolerance for cruelty, torture and war, especially during the last thousand years.³

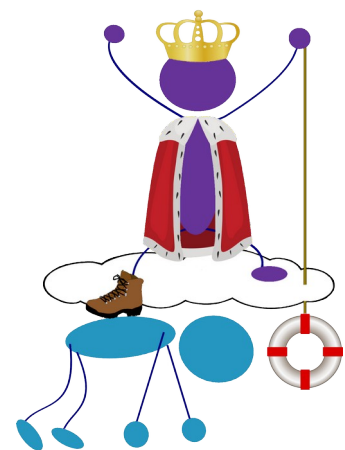
Humanity has apparently been increasing in compassion, slowly and in general, for millions of years. Compassion is sought and admired the world over. It is one of the principal characteristics of people who are respected and revered.

Unnecessary or involuntary domination is not compassionate. Yet despite the overall increased recognition of compassion as a valuable human trait, domination rules in almost all human social structures, economic structures, political structures, educational structures.

Our languages are replete with words referring to domination: master, ruler, lord, chief, head, commander, governor, controller, overlord, superior, supervisor, boss, sovereign, emperor, monarch, king, queen, dictator. People of many religions use these terms to address and refer to God. A system of domination is fundamental to most religious conventions.

Here is a depiction of a god that is dominating man, and at the same time offering to save him! In this version of god, man must continually be subservient, obey numerous rules, and perform rituals to obtain the god's favor. To be saved, man must depend on mercy from the very being that is keeping him down!

This image of "God" is capricious and mocking, keeping human beings in an inglorious, opprobrious position. Humans are forced to fear, supplicate and remain subservient in order to obtain temporary relief from our shame and suffering.



Something is wrong with this picture. If "God" were oppressing man on one hand and saving him on the other, then God would be the greatest hypocrite of all. Deceit and hypocrisy yield flawed results—not the magnificent universe we see all around us.

We help our children to stand up and be strong and capable. Religions say that God is benevolent, loving, kind—the epitome of compassion, as we expect our Creator to be. Does our Creator love us, or mock us and taunt us with superior power?

Would you want your children to grovel and beg? Would you want them to kill one another as a "sacrifice" for you? Would you require blood sacrifice of any kind? Such desires are not characteristic of the vast majority of humanity. The few people who would want such things are considered pathological—egomaniacs, psychopaths, sadists.

3 For a beautiful true story, see *Humans Prefer Cooperation*, https://wisdom2joy.com/Humans_Prefer_Cooperation.

This picture of God isn't loving or compassionate, but cruel, arrogant, deceitful, hypocritical. When we act this way toward other people or toward other creatures including the Earth, we are also unloving, cruel and arrogant. Domination is simply not loving or good, unless it is required for survival, or submission occurs voluntarily for a beneficial purpose.

Some people believe that human beings have a God-given right to dominate the Earth and all its creatures.⁴ Humanity has dominated other creatures more and more throughout history. People have even used our reproductive function, our creative ability, to dominate, hate and belittle, rather than to love and create.

However, the statement about man's dominion over the Earth ***doesn't say there wouldn't be any consequences!***

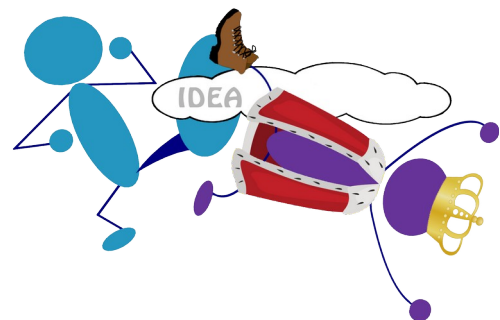
***The consequence of dominating others
is that one is dominated.***

Humanity certainly has been dominated! We are being dominated more and more—perhaps more subtly, but more completely. There is not a human being on this planet who has not been dominated, and the few at the top are in turn dominated by the beings whom they worship.

Would a loving God create magnificent human souls and such a wonderful Earth, and then make fun of the human creatures and force them to grovel and beg? Such an idea is not consistent with our hearts, our ideals, or parts of our scriptures.

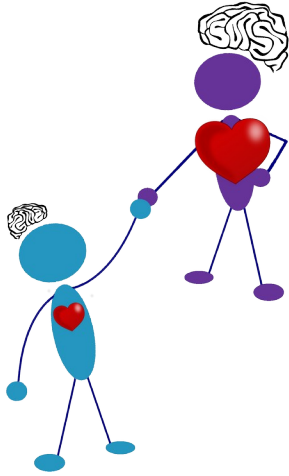
If God were the dominating force over humanity represented in the previous picture, human beings would have no “free will” or choice. Why would God give us choice, an intellect and the capacity to discriminate between helpful and harmful, if we were not intended to utilize these abilities? As one author wrote, “The angels, no less than a Master, are not permitted to issue imperative commands.”⁵

The ***idea*** that God dominates us and keeps us down, and then offers to save us with the other hand, cannot be correct. We need a picture that is consistent with our ideals of Love, wisdom, and Goodness. We need not reject the idea of God, only erroneous notions ***about*** God that we got from somewhere.



4 In Genesis 1:26-8 the Elohim (the strong ones around God's throne) said that man was to have dominion over the creatures of the Earth. *Perhaps* this was a statement recognizing that man is more intelligent and therefore has such dominion, rather than an edict that humans have divine permission to dominate all other creatures without consequence.

5 Mark Hedsel (Fred Gettings), *The Zelator: A Modern Initiate Explores the Ancient Mysteries* (Century, 1998), p. 259.



Scriptures of many religions tell us that God is compassionate, merciful, Love itself, supreme Goodness. Our image of God needs to reflect this Goodness—not the cruelty or capricious domination of earthly rulers.

Our Source that created our intelligence must have much greater intelligence than we do, as well as much greater love and wisdom.

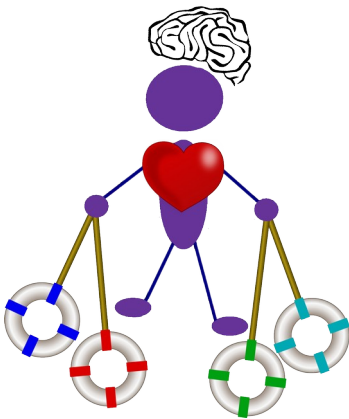
When we realize that our Creator must be full of Love, wisdom, and Goodness, we **feel** differently. We feel more comfortable, more optimistic, less fearful, and less stressed. We feel we're not alone and we can handle the difficulties that come up in life more easily.

Although we sometimes want to be spared hardships in life, our wise and intelligent Creator, like a good parent, usually lets us face difficulties in order that we can grow—in skills, in love, in intelligence, in wisdom. If God answered all prayers to remove difficulties, we would be complacent and wouldn't have occasion to develop and exercise our natural abilities.

Humanity is indeed being dominated, but not by the Goodness that created us—not by our Source.

3. Whence Our Savior?

Help! Who will save us, lift us up out of our odious oppression? In our down-trodden and weakened state, where can we find a savior?

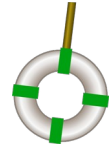


A loving, compassionate and intelligent God must hold many lifebuoys to keep us afloat and guide us to safe ground. Our religions, in fact, point to several guidelines that are lifebuoys from our Source.

The first is to refrain from doing harm to others. How can we expect a loving, compassionate, intelligent God to protect us while we unnecessarily harm other creatures? Although in our present world many people who do grievous harm do not experience **immediate, visible** consequences, there is no reason to assume that there are no consequences later, or that we could escape them.

By refraining from harming others, we build good will from our fellow travelers in life and grace from our Source. Our Creator must be far more knowledgeable and intelligent than we are, and we don't have the power or the right to demand to see immediate reward for a good deed, or immediate punishment for a bad deed, by anyone.

Acts of kindness, compassion, love, intelligence, truth, wisdom, justice, and doing what's right ("pono," "dharma"⁶) are lifesavers. Each and every one brings us closer to our Source, to Goodness itself. It's not necessary to be "perfect" (whatever that means); every good thought, wish, and deed counts.



Whenever we do something, we carry the knowledge of what we did in our own awareness—even if no one else knows about it. If we do something we feel is wrong, one result is that if someone else does it, we can't object with integrity or strength. We can't complain to God about it either. When we act with compassion and wisdom, forgiveness and intelligence, heart and mind, it is easier to accept grace, compassion, and forgiveness from others, from the universe, and from our Source.

If we don't want to be dominated, we must refrain from dominating, and from participating in systems that dominate others unnecessarily or involuntarily.



Another lifebuoy is surrendering to our Source, to Goodness. Surrendering to Love allows us to let go of our past and proceed with joyous confidence that we are not alone and have a direct connection with our very Source.

Surrendering means not only asking Goodness to enter and guide our minds, hearts, and actions. It also means giving up condemnation, vengeance, and prompt rewards for our own good deeds. It means letting go of personal resentment. It does not mean abdicating our responsibilities as a parent, teacher, citizen or leader. It does not mean ignoring our duty to support justice in society or to take necessary action.

When we surrender to Goodness, it's important to realize that it's not just a one-time commitment—we will have opportunities to make that choice again and again, in big ways and small. Just because we once made a decision to give our lives to "God," Goodness, does not mean that we can do no wrong, or that we are finished securing our future happiness. One big decision can change our lives—and us—if we repeat it over and over.



Great treatises of wisdom can also serve as lifebuoys, forms of saviorhood. Scholars who study scriptures can gain deep intellectual understanding of the truth about life, us and creation. When we comprehend and contemplate the magnificence and Goodness of our Source, we draw closer.

It is important to seek and focus on the core kernels of truth in texts, because meanings of words change with time and context. Wisdom leads us toward ineffable truth, not into cages of certainty, unfounded belief, or intellectual argument. Ultimate truth and knowing lie beyond the limits of human intellect (much to our dismay). Great texts use language of the day to point to what is beyond.

6 Dharma, Parts 1 and 2, <https://wisdom2joy.com/Dharma>, p. 1-5 or videos 1-2.

We need to examine the validity, source, and context of any text. What were the characteristics of the author(s)? Are they people we would respect, admire, or wish to emulate? What were the social and political conditions at the time? Were there any situations or debates that would have motivated the authors or the translators?

Most sacred writings are poetic and have layers of meaning. Many interpretations are offered by followers and scholars. This method of savior-hood requires a careful, discerning intellect, along with accurate intuition.

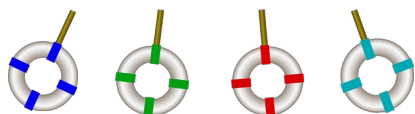
When using this lifebuoy, we need to remember that it is not the form, the lifebuoy, that is our goal—our goal is our Source that is beyond words, beyond our intellect. Scriptures point the way, as a lifebuoy draws us to safe ground, and our Source draws us to Truth and Goodness.

Some people have gained direct knowledge of our Source and of themselves through deep meditation, sometimes achieving extraordinary powers or knowledge along the way. Some of them have left records.



Their methods are rather extreme, such as spending many years in solitude in great austerity in a remote place. This is inconvenient for most of humanity engaged in everyday life, but people of many traditions have shown that it can be successful.

With this form of savior-hood, one must be constantly vigilant to avoid being distracted or waylaid by thoughts, emotions, desires of oneself or others, intellectual gyrations, judgments, commitments, visions, or random bodily sensations. This is why solitude is beneficial when attempting to reach our Source directly through our consciousness.

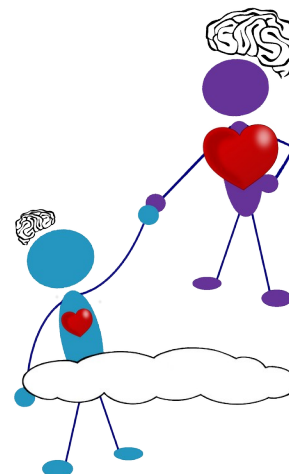


We can utilize all the lifebuoys to lift us up out of our oppression. They are all effective. They draw us toward God, our Source. We can use them with infinite variations, in our own time and in our own ways. These forms of savior-hood are not just one-time solutions; they can be used daily, even hourly—whenever we have a choice to make.

People of all religious traditions have left records of all these types of savior-hood. Our Creator has provided a path for each and every one of us, whatever our inclinations or temperament, and whatever our past.

Our Creator can also descend, in any form, to lift us up out of our oppression. Let us hope we recognize such a glorious opportunity. If our heart be hardened by meanness, our conscience burdened with guilt, or our vision clouded by untruth, we would not recognize our Savior. If we have already utilized the other lifebuoys, it is easier to accept the overwhelming Love offered by our Creator.

All these lifebuoys involve our own will and our own action. “God” does not force or dominate us with “power-over.”



4. Inside

There is an interesting legend about a monkey named “Hanuman.” When he was born, each deity gave him a special boon: strength, health, contentment, the ability to move faster than the wind and to change his body at will, and protection from water, fire, weapons, fatigue, and death itself.

As a child, Hanuman was naughty and mischievous. He didn’t obey and didn’t know how to control himself or use his abilities properly. He wreaked havoc in the forest, disturbing the prayers of holy men who lived there. Usually mild-tempered, they eventually became annoyed. They couldn’t call on the deities for help because the deities themselves had conferred the boons and would be insulted if anyone tried to interfere.



Finally, they decided to **curse** Hanuman **to be unaware of all his capacities!** He would only remember them when someone else reminded him. The curse worked: Hanuman stopped using his exceptional abilities, and the forests became peaceful again.⁷

***When he didn’t know he had capabilities,
he didn’t use them.***

Isn’t this story remarkably similar to our human condition? Countless people have demonstrated phenomenal abilities, from healing to extraordinary knowledge, and many claim that we all have these abilities. Belief is said to be essential, although most of us don’t know or believe we have these abilities.⁸ Perhaps someone needs to remind us.



The one to remind us certainly wouldn’t be someone who is dominating us; our dominators want us to remain powerless.

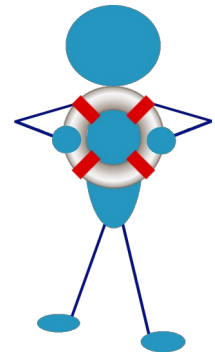
Many spiritual traditions exhort us to look inside, to know our Self. Each of us is a soul, a spark of our Creator. Although human beings can now create bodies through genetic engineering, including human hybrids, only God, our Source, can create souls.⁹

7 Valmiki, *Rāmāyaṇa*, Manmatha Nath Dutt, tr., Kishkindhākāṇḍa, boons §66:27-29 p. 373, <https://holybooks-lichtenbergpress.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/Ramayana-VOL-2-Aranya-Kishkindha-Sundara-Kanda.pdf>, *Ramayana Retold by Rajagopalachari*, §47 p. 130, <https://gita-society.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/ramayana.pdf>. Hanumān grew up and learned to use his powers in service of Goodness, and is now considered a deity.

8 Scriptures of many religions as well as individual people make these claims. John 14:12 “Whoever believes in me will do the works I do, and even greater works,” Matthew 9:22, Mark 5:34, 10:52, Luke 8:48, Luke 18:42 “Your faith has healed you.” Buddhist texts, yoga texts, sufi texts and numerous biographies and autobiographies discuss people with special abilities.

9 Just a conjecture: When the Elohim said (Genesis 1:26), “Let us create man in our own image,” perhaps they were creating or engineering the human body, male and female, as God the Creator created souls. Some people interpret the Elohim as being the one God, even though the word is distinctly plural; in some languages, a plural can be used as an honorific.

When we look inward, we find the divine spark inside us. It doesn't mean we act perfectly all the time, or that our egos are God. It means that our Source is the core of our being. It means we are never really separate from our Creator, "God." We have a permanent lifeline, a permanent direct line of communication to the ultimate Source of knowledge, love, strength, goodness, truth, wisdom, and joy. Sensing our connection and unity with God, our Source, is much more effective than begging, supplicating, or attempting to strike a bargain.



This spark inside us can guide us, infallibly, if we allow it. It is our ultimate lifebuoy. It is permanent and continual. Whatever we do, whatever anyone else says or does, we have access to it. No one can ever take it away.

This spark of our Creator never dominates us, ever. It never even attempts to force us in any way. It never deceives us. Our own minds and senses can deceive us, but not our divine spark.

It is through this lifeline that people have demonstrated exceptional qualities and abilities. Through our direct connection with our Source, we are able to love and act with strength we didn't know we had, realize things we didn't know, devise creative solutions to problems we didn't think were solvable, do things we didn't think we could do, and feel joy we didn't know was possible.

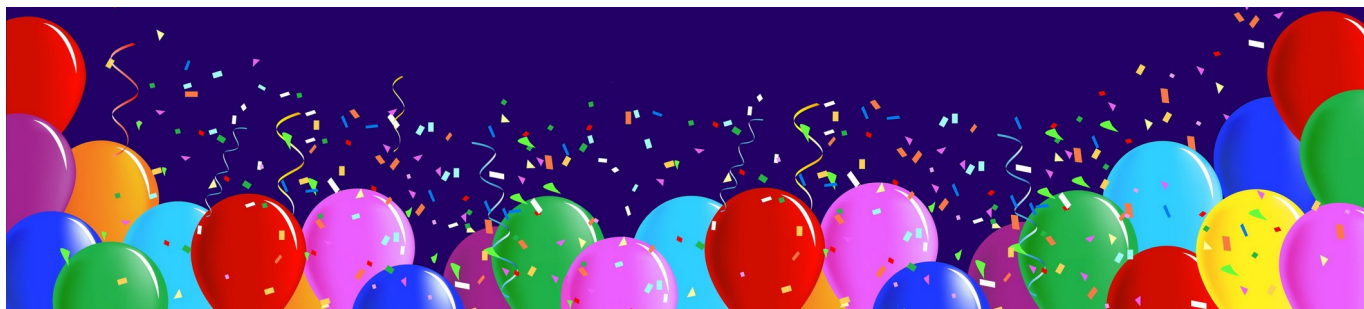
We eventually find the divine spark inside, and when we do, there is great rejoicing in the heavens.



Life is difficult precisely because God does *not* dominate us.

In order to eliminate tyranny from our world—indeed, from this corner of our universe—we must eliminate unnecessary domination in thought and behavior, individually and collectively.

When we emulate the Goodness of our Source, we dominate others less and less, and we all experience more love, more wisdom, more joy—more of the best of life.



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