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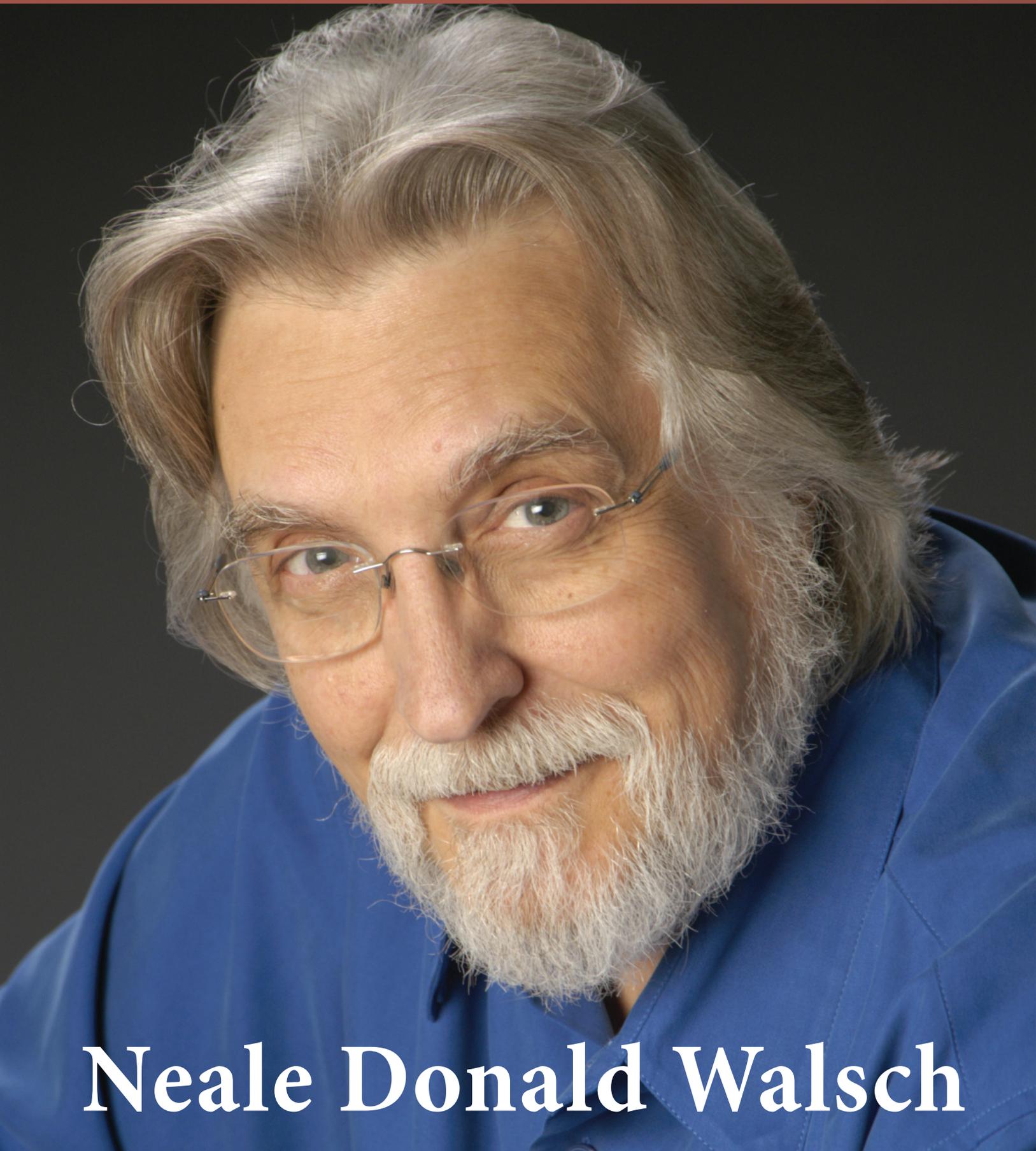
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Magazine



**Neale Donald Walsch on the  
Courage to Question Beliefs**

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*Listening in With ...*



**Neale Donald Walsch**

# Talking About TRANSFORMATION

**Neale Donald Walsch** is as prolific as he is profound. It all started with the 1995 book *Conversations With God*, which spent more than two and a half years on *The New York Times* best-seller list. He's now the author of 29 books published in 37 languages that have sold more than 10 million copies. Walsch's most recent offering is *God's Message to the World: You've Got Me All Wrong* (Rainbow Ridge Books, 2014). In it, he explains how the evolution of humanity is driven by our growing willingness to question our beliefs about God. Below, *Unity Magazine* editor

**Katy Koontz** strikes up her own conversation with Walsch.

**Katy Koontz:** In your new book, you say the world needs a Civil Rights Movement for the Soul. What is that, and why do we need it?

**Neale Donald Walsch:** The soul is truly the last great frontier for our species. I see the Civil Rights Movement for the Soul as a global movement that would free humanity from the oppression of its belief in a violent, angry, and vindictive God. This belief has given people the moral authority to behave in this same way toward one another, and for everyone to tolerate it. A striking example is the death penalty—killing people as a means of demonstrating that it's not okay to kill people.

**KK:** That's quite a contradiction, isn't it?

**NDW:** Yes, and we fail to see that contradiction, which is a mark of our relative immaturity as a species. We live in a society that uses violence to seek to end violence, hatred to seek to end hatred, and anger to seek to end anger. Our understanding of morality has come down through the ages from those who would tell us about what God wants and what is true for God. If you keep track of all the statements in the Bible, you'll discover that more than two million people have been killed at the hand or the command of God. We presume that what's good for God is good for humans, and so we act with both impunity and immunity as we apply violence toward those who are not doing things in the way we think is

correct—just as we assume God does.

We have an uncivilized civilization because we believe in an uncivilized God who would sentence even kind, caring, compassionate, loving people to everlasting torture and damnation simply for belonging to the wrong religion, because they didn't come to God through the right doorway. Once we free ourselves from the oppression of this belief, we will change the entire experience of humanity.

**KK:** You used the word *will*, not *could*. So you see success as inevitable?

**NDW:** No question. We are coming to that place slowly but surely. It could happen in the next 40 or 50 years. The human race is losing patience with itself. We are beginning to ask the right questions—not the least of which is this: Is it possible that there's something we don't fully understand about God and about life, the understanding of which would change *everything*? That's real progress, because for hundreds, if not thousands, of years we've not even allowed ourselves to ask that question.

In every area of human experience, we question the prior assumption *except* in our religious or spiritual beliefs. In science, as soon as we make a discovery, we question it. We test it to see if that process is worthy of putting our faith in. We do the same in technology. However, we refuse to question the prior assumption that we've got everything right about God from scriptures that were written thousands of years ago. If we did the same

thing in medicine, we'd be walking into an operating suite ready to conduct brain surgery with a very sharp stone.

**KK:** The number of people who categorize themselves as “spiritual but not religious” is growing—is that a sign that we're finally willing to change our beliefs?

**NDW:** The first step is just questioning our beliefs. A Mormon woman was actually excommunicated this past year for simply demonstrating in front of the temple to ask why women can't become priests. So, you see, questioning is often not allowed. In certain places in the world, you can actually be sentenced to death for questioning religious doctrine. The issue here is not whether we're going to change our beliefs, but whether we're going to go to the first level of freedom and allow ourselves to question those beliefs.

**KK:** This reminds me of the news that at certain points in her life, Mother Teresa questioned her faith. That was a huge eye-opener for a lot of people.

**NDW:** Yes, even the most saintly among us have questioned their beliefs, not the least of whom was the man called Christ who on the cross cried out, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” before he finally submitted to his deepest understanding. We all question our beliefs. The real issue is whether we do it only in private or whether we are allowed to do it publically.

**KK:** You also write that changing beliefs is more effective than changing behaviors. If we manage to change a behavior *without* changing the belief behind it, is there still a benefit?

## God is talking to us all the time in every way that God can possibly get through to us ...

**NDW:** Thousands of organizations around the world are attempting to alter humanity's behaviors. Feed the hungry. Clothe the poor. Stop the oppression of women. End the discrimination against gays, blacks, or whatever minority you want to name. None of the behaviors *ever change*—make that capital E, capital C—because we insist on holding true to the beliefs that have sponsored those behaviors to begin with.

Nothing we have systematically put into place on this planet has produced the outcomes for which it was designed. We've created political systems to allow nations to coexist in peace, but war is still rampant. We've created economical systems to produce at least the opportunity for economic abundance, yet half the global wealth is now held by one percent of the population.

Our ecological systems were designed to produce a sustainable lifestyle; our social systems were designed to produce peace, joy, and togetherness; and our systems of public safety were designed to make people feel protected—yet all of these have produced the exact opposite of what we intended. How is it possible in the year 2015 for 2.6 billion people on the planet to not have indoor sanitation, for 1.6 billion people to not have electricity, and for 653 children to die of starvation every hour?

Saddest of all, our spiritual systems, which were designed to bring us closer to God, have also produced the exact opposite result.

**KK:** Yet you still feel we can turn this

around within a generation?

**NDW:** It happened at the time of the Renaissance. In that roughly 300-year period, everything changed—our politics, our economics, our spirituality, and our culture.

**KK:** So we need a new Renaissance?

**NDW:** One is currently being created, but it will take only one-tenth the time, about 30 years, because thanks to the Internet, we now have the ability to communicate with each other instantaneously.

**KK:** I love your metaphor that God is the stem cell of the universe. How does that work?

**NDW:** It astonished me to learn that there are undifferentiated cells in the human body that can become brain tissue, muscle tissue, heart tissue, or whatever other tissue we want to duplicate. In my conversations with God, I was invited to explore the possibility that God is the original, pure expression of the essential energy that we call life itself undifferentiated, which has the ability to individuate and differentiate itself and form a million, gazillion different physical expressions of life. If the human body is capable of such a miracle, what is the universe capable of?

**KK:** The flip side of “As above, so below”?

**NDW:** Precisely, but we need to let go of our limiting ideas of what the ultimate reality is. Shakespeare nailed it when he had Hamlet say, “There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy.” Our opportunity then is to at least consider the possibility that there just might be some data missing.

**KK:** You talk about affirmation and confirmation as separate concepts. Can you explain the difference?

**NDW:** An affirmation is a statement seeking to convince the mind of something that is true. A confirmation doesn't convince the mind of anything. It simply announces what is already clear to the mind, the heart, and the soul. So although I encourage people who feel affirmations are helpful to go ahead and use them, I believe affirmations are most often misused as declarations that something is not the way we want it to be. They affirm that it will *become* that way, whereas a confirmation announces things are perfect just as they exist right here, right now.

**KK:** So the focus is not on wanting the situation to improve (such as a sickness being healed), but on accepting the perfection of the situation while allowing for it to change however it will?

**NDW:** As a true spiritual master would say, if I am truly an individuation of divinity, then nothing can be occurring in me that should not be occurring. What you resist persists, and what you look at in its truest form ceases to have its illusory effect on you—and then it no longer matters to you whether the physical health condition persists or disappears.

**KK:** Because you're looking at it from a different level.

**NDW:** The greatest example of this I know of is Christ. We have to ask ourselves two fundamental questions: First, was anything happening to him that he did not want to have happen—in other words, was he the victim of his circumstance? And second, if the answer to that question is no, then why wouldn't the same thing be true of us, unless we think that we are other than Christ? That's what he came here to show us, and we completely missed the point.

**KK:** This is also the idea behind the prayer you share in your book: *Thank*

In every area of human experience, we question the prior assumption except in our religious or spiritual beliefs.



you, God, for helping me to understand that this problem has already been solved for me.

**NDW:** That's my favorite prayer because it repositions me into what I call the center of knowing, which is beyond hoping, beyond even faith. It's *knowing* that nothing can happen to me that is not happening through me, and nothing can happen through me that is not the next perfect opportunity for the next greatest expression of who I really am. So I thank God for every outcome, every situation, every circumstance, and every moment of this miraculous experience that I call physical life because this repositions me in the space of my own mastery, my own awareness of why life is showing up the way it is. Gratitude is the single most powerful tool in the transformation of the human experience.

**KK:** So that allows you to let go of certain beliefs about things not working the way they should, yes?

**NDW:** Precisely, and that shift in my energy field often has a positive impact on the exterior circumstance. Again, what you resist persists, because the very act of resisting something places it there. You can't lean against air; you'll fall down. If you lean against a wall, then you'll find that it's there. The act of nonresistance announces to your mind, which is operating at a whole different level than your soul, that there's nothing going on that's imperfect. It allows you to notice who you really are and why you're here. I assure you it has nothing to do with "get the guy, get the girl, get the car, get the job, get the spouse, get

the house, get the kids, get the better car, get the better job, get the better spouse."

**KK:** Do you think part of our problem is that, as a culture, we're so action-oriented?

**NDW:** Of course. We think we can do our way out of this conundrum of not knowing why we're here. We spend most of our lives doing this and doing that, and we wind up at the end with nothing but a great big pile of doo-doo. It turns out, in fact, we are not human doings, we are *human beings*, and we have come here to be something in particular.

If we use every single moment of our lives to call forth the aspects of divinity that we are, our lives would change in 24 hours. That's been the message of every great spiritual master who ever lived. They've all said basically the same thing, and we simply haven't listened. These mysteries of life were solved back in the days of Buddha, who understood nonresistance completely, as have other great masters, both male and female, throughout the millennia. The question is not to whom is God talking. The question is *who's listening?*

**KK:** Touché.

**NDW:** The day of the individual guru is over. This is not about Neale Donald Walsch. God talks to everybody all the time. People all over the world are sharing with each other in a teaching, helping, and healing way—not the least of whom are the people putting out the very magazine in which this interview is appearing. This is just another instrument, another version, another

conversation with God. God is talking to us all the time in every way that God can possibly get through to us, including a small magazine someone happens to pick up that causes them to say to themselves, *Wow, this is exactly what I needed to hear at this point in my life.*

**KK:** That's our goal!

**NDW:** I humbly offer a gentle invitation for everyone reading these words right now to decide that from this moment forward, everything you allow yourself to do will be done as a demonstration of the divinity of who you imagine and understand yourself to be. You'll still get up and go to work, or get the kids off to school, or clean the house, but for remarkably different reasons.

It's been made clear to me that we are all part of the one thing that is, and that's the whole point of the Unity philosophy. It's the whole message God hopes to get across to all of us. My invitation would be to explore what it would be like to live from that place for one day, just for this next 24 hours. But be careful—because unity is addictive.

**KK:** That just might change your life.

**NDW:** It just might. And wouldn't that be a grand thing to put your head down on your death pillow and say, "Well, it finally made sense." 

