

## What In the World Can I Do?

There is a great awareness opening up among the people of our world as daily news brings us information about the pollution of our air, water and land. Gone are the days when we could just sit back and watch the erosion of life in other parts of the world and shake our heads at what we saw on our television screens. Slowly we became aware that what we saw somewhere else was affecting us, too.

Sadly, one of the greatest eye openers to our current awareness was the Chernobyl nuclear accident in 1986. Not only did the nuclear debris from the explosion affect the area around Chernobyl, but two days later it was picked up by researchers in Sweden when radiation was detected by their own nuclear power stations. From there the nuclear fallout was found in the air over Scotland, Poland and much of Europe, contaminating food supplies and animals, forcing many European countries to destroy much of their crops. At that time we also heard of barges full of city garbage floating down the east coast looking for places to dump their waste. Humanity became more aware of 'displaced people' being forced to live in cardboard boxes because they couldn't take care of themselves and had nowhere to go. We started to hear about animals and wildlife being born deformed or dying because of pollution. Deforestation of rain forests opened up a Pandora's box of lost ecosystems, influx of new diseases, and annihilation of disease-curing herbs and drugs. Earthquakes, volcanoes, fires and other natural disasters seem to be rampant.

Can we still afford to sit back and shake our heads at others misfortunes?

Finally we are asking half in hope and half in desperation, "What in the world can I do?" We have been inspired by people such as Mother Teresa who devoted her life to working with the poor and ill; and world citizens like John Denver and Steve Irwin, who used their celebrity to make the commitment of bringing awareness regarding wildlife and ecological dangers to our attention.

What in the world can we do? Part of the answer may surprise you. You don't need a lot of money, influence or time. We need to change our attitudes. Living our daily lives with as much honesty and integrity as we can has an enormous affect on those around us, which in turn affects the people around them. Doing things as simple as separating our trash for recycling and cutting down on the plastic we use has an enormous affect on the health of our planet. We can stop wasting water; heeding the advice of conservation from people who have studied the problems facing us, and be willing to help even if it means a little sacrifice on our parts. We can contribute to funds and organizations who work for the healing of our planet either by volunteering or contributing financially. We can listen to someone who really needs somebody to listen to them. You don't have to solve their

problems, just be there to listen and send them good thoughts. Offer to bring groceries to someone who is housebound. Clean out a closet and donate what you don't need to an organization such as The Salvation Army, Good Will or a local church, so they can share what you no longer need with someone who can use it. Visit someone who is ill. Tell a joke! Share not only tears, but laughter. Pray, it's incredibly powerful. Try not to judge or criticize. Adopt or foster a pet from the humane society or offer to take a neighbor's dog for a walk. Feed the birds in winter. Hold positive images of the world in your mind – and of your life. Remember the words to the song, "If everyone lit just one little candle, what a bright world this would be!"

Our television screens are now full of images of people helping each other dig out from underneath earthquakes, fires and tsunamis that have devastated so much of our planet over the past several years. The pendulum is swinging back from the isolation of self to the helping of others as we see more and more people offering their services to help others who are facing life's challenges.

What in the world can we do? We're doing it. But let's do more...