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What we do, and what is done to us, has its roots finally in what we are in ourselves and what we want of life. If International Women's Year is to be more than just another occasion for rhetoric, women will have to look hard and well at themselves, as well as at the world and its problems of war, inequality, injustice, pollution, and the death of earth and seas.

The human race is really and inescapably one. Yet we lay emphasis on the divisions, not on the unity; and we blame others for the problems in which we ourselves have so large a responsibility. One thing we should know by now is that the way in which we treat our children is by far the greatest factor in what they become as adults. Women, then, have made this world at least as much as men have. Children pick up much more from what we actually are than from what we tell them: our attitudes, our expressions, our responses, and withdrawals teach them far more than the words we use, which may and often do contradict what they really know about us. If we enjoy and respect our children, that will leave them free to enjoy and respect us and the world. If, however, unconsciously, we resent and dislike them, that too will come through and will mark and limit them and through them, the world itself.

Women often like to think of themselves as non-aggressive and as sources of love in a loveless world. The truth may be very different. We have made this discordant and aggressive world, just as much as men have. True, it has often been in passive, even negative ways; but these can be at least as destructive as the positive ones.

The world holds up a mirror to us all, in which few of us are honest enough to recognize ourselves. Not to speak out against violence, injustice, greed, and the rape of the earth is as bad as to enact them, but to speak as though we ourselves had nothing to do with them adds dishonesty to all the rest.

In International Women's Year, let us look at ourselves, too, in that mirror.