



The intention of this article is to enlighten and spread awareness, not to offend. Fear of the unknown is the leading cause of separation and judgmental attitudes. However, reaching out and exploring the unknown in love may just surprise you in what you learn. Naturally, the intentional spiritual path you've chosen is indeed your choice -- living by the Freewill Principle. When we respect and honor each other, we live in harmony with a unified mindset.

I'm Not Religious!

What amazes me is that some people will say that they are not religious, just spiritual, yet cling on to the traditions, dogmas or messenger from a particular religion. Not to pick on "Christians" (since I once considered myself with that "label"), but saying you are spiritual, yet still believing that "Jesus" is your savior and that the Bible is the only true word of God - still follows the logic that you are a Christian, which is indeed a religion - thus religious. The same of course could be said for any follower of Agnosticism, Atheism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Muslim, Wiccan, etc. These too are "labels" that have so many interpretations and boundaries.

So exactly why do people not wish to be called or referred to as "religious"? - most likely it's because it comes with the connotation that you may be over zealous in defending what you hold to be your Truth, and will argue with others about what is true or not, without realizing that everyone is entitled to their own beliefs as well.

The "my God" is the only true god syndrome has caused more anguish, killing, wars and arguments than any other subject - besides maybe politics. Speaking of which, let's go back to the statements made by George W. Bush

in 2003 - "God told me to invade Iraq".

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/bush-god-told-me-to-invade-iraq-509925.html>

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/chronicle/archive/2005/10/07/MNGNVF3SFM1.DTL>

See what religions do - the war for peace mentality, when in reality, this is simply a continuation of divide and conquer = for control

Most people do not truly understand that war is a highly profitable business and the winners are those who care nothing about anyone except for their own gain and control. Read the small book 'War is a Racket' here:

www.warisaracket.com

Which, if any, of the 10,000 world religions is the true one? -- enlightening article: <http://www.religioustolerance.org/retrue.htm>

But you already know! Yet you don't want to know the Truth, you want to know the truth as you understand it. This is the greatest barrier to your enlightenment. You think you already know the truth! You think you already understand how it is. So you agree with everything you see, hear or read that falls into that paradigm of your understanding, and reject everything which does not. And this you call learning. This you call being open minded. Alas, you can never be open to anything new, so long as you are closed to everything save your own Truth.

Let's consider this approach -- celebrating the differences in people while viewing everyone through the eyes of oneness nurtures powerful connections

and creates a plane of existence where everyone is mutually supportive and respectful. When we replace this spirit of separateness with compassion, much of the friction in human relations will disappear. When we realize that we all are one, then there will be no impulse to jealousy and no room for conflict. There will be no inclination to like or dislike people; everyone will be regarded with the eyes of compassion and love. ~ Neale Donald Walsch

“Souls don’t have races or sexes or religions. They are beyond artificial divisions.” ~ Brian Weiss

Intolerance of differences always exists in people who don’t know who they are, people who don’t have a strong sense of their own authentic self, the soul within. Intolerance is rooted in fear. The basis for having a strong sense of self-esteem is to replace our unconscious idea of basic unworthiness with a conscious knowing of our fundamental inherent goodness. As Matthew Fox states in "Original Blessing", the notion of ‘original sin’ must be replaced with the truth of ‘original blessing’. Being in touch with our essential goodness, we can see the essential goodness in others as well.

“Beliefs separate. Loving thoughts unite.” ~ Paul Ferrini

So what is the answer? **You** instinctively already know. Yet, with years of programming, many have been conditioned and feel they must give their power away. They need a savior or some messenger or religious icon that they can "hang their hat on."

Spirit - the life force exists in everything. It follows, then, that ANY path, any encounter is spiritual if we have the awareness to see it as such. Going deeper, going higher, emptying, connecting, believing or disbelieving, bouncing off the bottom, experiencing the heights, in pain, in ecstasy. Too often, we search afar for our own purpose when it is IN our lives all the time, waiting for us to express it more openly. Bring greater awareness to each

encounter and situation in life. Tune IN to what you are inspired to do, who you are inspired to be. Your answers are waiting for you to pay attention - every moment! Peace is truly found within.

*"He who experiences the unity of life sees his own Self in all beings, and all beings in his own Self, and looks on everything with an impartial eye" ~
Siddhārtha Gautama*

Continued blessings in your path to Self discovery!
love joy peace to you...

Steven

admin, www.wave1111.com

direct link: <http://blogs.myspace.com/index.cfm?>

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p.s. If anyone was offended by the words "programming" or "conditioning", please read this:

The Story of the 8 Monkeys (this is reportedly based on an actual experiment conducted in the UK):

Put eight monkeys in a room. In the middle of the room is a ladder, leading to a bunch of bananas hanging from a hook on the ceiling.

Each time a monkey tries to climb the ladder, all the monkeys are sprayed with ice water, which makes them miserable. Soon enough, whenever a monkey attempts to climb the ladder, all of the other monkeys, not wanting to be sprayed, set upon him and beat him up.

Soon, none of the eight monkeys ever attempts to climb the ladder.

One of the original monkeys is then removed, and a new monkey is put in the room. Seeing the bananas and the ladder, he wonders why none of the other monkeys are doing the obvious. But undaunted, he immediately begins to climb the ladder.

All the other monkeys fall upon him and beat him silly. He has no idea why. However, he no longer attempts to climb the ladder.

A second original monkey is removed and replaced. The newcomer again attempts to climb the ladder, but all the other monkeys hammer the crap out of him.

This includes the previous new monkey, who, grateful that he's not on the receiving end this time, participates in the beating because all the other monkeys are doing it. However, he has no idea why he's attacking the new monkey.

One by one, all the original monkeys are replaced. Eight new monkeys are now in the room. None of them have ever been sprayed by ice water.

None of them attempt to climb the ladder. All of them will enthusiastically beat up any new monkey who tries, without having any idea why.

Sometimes, this feels like life. People just accept the status quo as truth because others are seemingly doing the same, without knowing why they do that. They are not quite sure whether what they have been doing all along can be improved or changed. They may even say it's the policy or a matter of public opinion. At times, it feels it's just the standard practices that have been passed down from one generation to the next. Nothing else. Then if someone ask questions that are too far out of the comfort zone, that someone is ridiculed and scorned. All they did was ask a simple question that the others did not wish to think about. Just like the new monkey, who has no any idea why.

"Peace is not won by those who fiercely guard their differences, but by those who with open minds and hearts seek out connections." ~ Katherine Paterson