

Tolerance Is Understanding

Submitted by Betty T.

If someone were to tell us that all of our hates, fears, and intolerances are due to a lack of understanding we would be offended and we would consider the implication an insult to our intelligence. Yet this is exactly the case, for when we truly understand another person we cannot hate or fear him in any way. There can be no intolerance where there is understanding.

When we find ourselves hypercritical of another person to the point where our dislikes are causing us mental discomfort, we should stop and ask ourselves the question, "Why do I dislike that person?" The answer may surprise us, for we are very often guilty, ourselves of the same faults which we find so disagreeable in other people. There is an old axiom that goes "what you say about John tells us more about you than it does about John." And there is a great deal of



truth is that statement. Well then, if we gradually come to realize that all of the other people in the world are blessed with the same basic motivations as we are, we will find it increasingly more difficult to lose patience with the foibles of others. Furthermore, if we honestly wish to uncover some of our own faults we need only make a list of the action of those people whom we heartily dislike, at which time we will discover that we have made not only a list of our pet peeves and hates, but a list of our own faults as well. They are synonymous.

In short, if you would have tolerance for your fellow man, learn to understand him. And if you would learn to understand your fellow man, first learn to understand yourself. It is astounding how much every human is like every other human. Tolerance, then, is understanding--yourself.

