

Unpolarize

(bring America into balance again)

What is it that divides our nation to the point where it seems that its either my way or the highway, that I am completely right and you're completely wrong, that my thoughts are clean and opposing thoughts are unclean, that I only want to listen to those who believe as I do??? I call this demon “unsubstantiated judgment.”

In politics, it seems that listening to each other and reaching across the aisle for discussion and support is a thing of the past, when we looked to the citizens needs and not our own selfish wants, finding a balance so that most if not all citizens were represented.

These days, we can find extremists who circle the wagons and shut out most, if not all, opposing conversation. Many of us act sort of like a cult that forbids all in our group to listen or talk to someone with an opposing view. This feels very insular and stops the flow of information and opinions that we need to help round out our own thoughts, helping us see the flaws or inconsistencies in our own thinking, encouraging self-regulation of our directions, and helping us live with others in the society.

Many times, we make judgments with only our own personal background as a source, and we instinctively taint our decisions with the self and the ego, and stop listening to others or seeking their feedback on a particular topic. What’s left is a separation of our society where individuals stand alone in disharmony with each other.

How do we change?

There are many who write and speak on this subject and I invite you to investigate. To name a few...

Byron Katie is doing an amazing job with "The Work." She has developed a system where you can ask yourself six different questions to determine the accuracy of your own judgment. The Work can be found in her book titled “Loving What Is” or at her website: <http://thework.com/en>

Speaker Megan Phelps-Roper offers several techniques in her wonderful speech about leaving the Westboro Baptist Church, such as:

1. Find others who do not agree with you and listen to what they say.

2. Politically share your thoughts and dreams with those who represent you in government.

You can listen to her talk at this website:

https://www.ted.com/talks/megan_phelps_roper_i_grew_up_in_the_westboro_baptist_church_here_s_why_i_left?language=en

By offering inquiry and openly asking questions that encourage others to speak their minds provides us with a plethora of information to improve our own decisions about how we feel about things. This very act of truly listening helps build bridges and connections with others. “When we listen, truly listen, each one of us has the ability to touch another's inner core, thus resulting in great impact on our lives.” (from the cover of my book, “Listening for Treasures in the Wind”)

Polarization is demeaning and harmful for any democracy. I believe though that by engaging others and then using the joint information and personal connection, we can support each other and stand in harmony, bringing America into balance again.

