

IGNORANCE AND INDIFFERENCE: SIGNS OF OUR TIMES?

The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing. Edmund Burke.

WHAT TO KNOW!

- ❖ There are several types of ignorance; some of which can be very harmful.
- ❖ Ordinary ignorance refers to basically, a lack of knowledge, and may motivate people to explore and learn more information if they accept that they don't know everything
- ❖ Higher ignorance refers to recognizing that no matter how much a person knows about something, there is still more to know
- ❖ Motivated ignorance is usually harmful and occurs when people avoid learning potentially valuable information
- ❖ Motivated ignorance is widely used by corporations, governments and politicians to make sure that certain information does not become available
- ❖ Willful ignorance occurs when people choose to ignore the facts or truths; this is the "don't bother me with the facts" philosophy
- ❖ Willfully ignorant people tend not to evaluate things intellectually unless they have to
- ❖ They tend to be conformists; rather than exert effort to think individually, they will believe others and avoid conflict
- ❖ People also often have difficulty with accepting that they are wrong and will stick to their beliefs despite contradictory evidence
- ❖ Ignorance is a common denominator in racism, homophobia, anti-Semitism, and other forms of extremism
- ❖ Ignorance of performance standards can lead to distorted thinking
 - ❖ An experiment at Cornell university by Dunning and Kruger found that unskilled people often believe they have superior skills because of their inability to assess their true abilities
 - ❖ Another result of this study found that highly skilled people underestimate their abilities and assume that what is easy for them is also easy for others
- ❖ Indifference occurs when a person stops caring and doesn't feel bad about it
- ❖ Indifference occurs for several reasons:
 - ❖ When there is low self-esteem and the belief in one self is lost
 - ❖ When self-confidence or the importance of what you are doing is lost
 - ❖ When hope is lost especially after multiple failures
 - ❖ When attention is given to another major more important problem
- ❖ Overcoming ignorance and indifference should be a lifelong process of questioning, discussing, and learning

WHAT TO DO!

- ❖ Do not accept that it is okay for you to be ignorant or indifferent
- ❖ Recognize that although we may be smart, there is a lot that we are ignorant about
- ❖ Overcome ignorance by learning, reading, challenging, and accepting new information
- ❖ Do not be rigid or stuck in your beliefs; if something is not working, change it
- ❖ Do not accept that all you hear on the news or in social media is accurate
- ❖ Overcome indifference by writing, reading, blogging, expressing your beliefs to others
- ❖ Travel, find adventure, join a group where you can get different opinions
- ❖ Be assertive, create, teach, or volunteer to help others
- ❖ Seek professional help if you have difficulty overcoming being ignorant or indifferent

WE CAN HELP!

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