



“TEACH YOUR CHILDREN WELL”: ARGUING IN FAVOUR OF PEDAGOGICALLY JUSTIFIABLE HOSPITALITY EDUCATION

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Background

1. Why are acts of theo-intolerance on the increase worldwide, instead of decreasing?
2. Why would some people deliberately and willfully choose to behave in a theo-intolerant manner?
3. Why don't theo-tolerance-related interventions seem to be making any difference whatsoever as part of our global efforts to curb and, eventually, prevent incidences of theo-intolerant behavior? Is it perhaps because our pedagogical efforts are (at least partially) to blame for this?





Rationale

When the principal yearning and inclination (i.e. mutual respect, recognition and hospitality) of *homo educationis* (educated man) is conceptually incarcerated, it realistically reduces all subsequent pedagogical attempts to the pursuit of inward-looking, self-righteous, sanctimonious, pretentious, hypocritical and self-justified exhibits of social conduct that are mediated (more often than not) by markedly ill-informed teachers, instructors, coaches, educators and even educationists.



Rationale

Whenever the switch is made in (what are supposed to be safe and dialogical) educational spaces from educated human beings' primal yearning to look away from themselves towards the Other for assistance, love and companionship-in-relationship, to ventriloquizing the *zeitgeist*-herd's insistence on using and referring to terms like "religious tolerance", there is always an educational and moral blackout. For the vast majority of people, this blackout is total and final, for it more or less defines the basis of and rationale for most of their subsequent social conduct.





Reflecting on tolerance and intolerance

Theo-tolerant, as well as theo-intolerant behavior both reflect an excluding and exclusive gaze inwardly, instead of an including and inclusive outreach outwardly. Extending theo-tolerance towards someone else remains a “charity; a paternalistic gesture” (Derrida.). The notion of tolerance mostly designates a reluctant acceptance of someone less than myself. As such, it gestates dependency and subordination. It cultivates silence and marginalization (to be shunted aside) and it incubates social invisibility.

Theo-intolerant behaviour is at the same time self-shutting and self-disconnecting.



Reflecting on hospitality

Hospitality, in contrast, concentrates on human sameness. Hospitality is essentially distance-crossing, closeness-generating, nearness-promoting and inviting. Hospitality, in contrast to theo-(in)tolerance, therefore creates interaction; it creates a safe “tending space”; a dialogical sanctuary in which both the Self and the Other feel that they are accepted completely and that they are genuinely trusted. This tending space and dialogical sanctuary then provide the potential for their being together (social association) ultimately to intensify to a more intimate, fonder, more confidential and encountering relationship.



Reflecting on hospitality

Hospitality is about the continuous *RE*-cognizing, *RE*-ceiving and obliging, accommodating welcoming of the Other. It is an active, reiterative, dialogic process that is focused and trained on the establishment and maintenance of an authentic existential encounter with the Other (effectively a fundamental *liebendes-mit-einander-sein*) (Binswanger) with reciprocity as its essential feature. Hospitality is a configuration of human behaviour that continually confronts and challenges self-illusion, self-delusion and eventual misunderstandings. Hospitality is social interactive behaviour that is driven by the unreserved, unconditional acceptance of responsibility for the Other and by a selfless commitment to being available to and for the Other.



Our pedagogic obligation

We should teach our children well. We should all teach them from now on that unconditional acceptance of the Other is likely to lead conclusively to peaceful human co-existence through hospitality as (a) **RE**-spect and (b) **RE**-cognition. Flourishing, prospering hospitality that is undergirded by sincere mutual respect and responsible, honourable and reciprocal respect and recognition, is undoubtedly pedagogically justifiable – anywhere on the face of this planet. Hospitality fundamentally implies, presumes and demands an altogether different configuration of human behavioural acumen than apathetic carelessness, aloofness, nonchalance, indifferent toleration, or so-called “non- interference on principle”. Hospitable behaviour is always welcoming, open, generous, cordial and non-judgmental.



Conclusion

We should teach our children always to enter into a “Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)” with the Other:

When the Other is present in our space, s/he announces his/her presence with the following memorandum: *“Here I am. Where are you? I am a human being among fellow human beings. I am your equal. Acknowledge, respect and recognize me. I, too, have a countenance, a voice and a point of view that deserves to be respected, recognized, heard and, above all, understood.”*

Let us help our children seek the truth. They need it, before they can die.