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Ideal and Real Issues

by

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Ideal and Real Issues

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When issues are debated solely on the basis of ideas devoid of the ideals, then the real issues have not been raised. For example, balancing a national budget is not an issue. The real issue is balancing the budget *and* taking care of the poor, the sick, the aged, the handicapped and the oppressed.

Thus, when ideals are considered in our decision-making, then we are dealing with the real issues. Ideals have a quality of selflessness that relate to the highest good. The quality of our decisions are determined by the ideals we exemplify or put into action. Sometimes, if not most of the time, an indecision becomes a decision in itself. Thus it is our own ideal decision that truly resolves a real issue.

The usual confusion arises when issues are narrowed down to popular clichés called, *social, economic, religious, ethical, family, environmental, community, political*, and at its narrowest point, we have *gender* or *personal* issues. In all of these different issues (and there are more), if we are able to sort out and highlight the ideals, we may yet find the common ground that is truly universal or holistic.

Take, for example, the ideals of truth, friendship, or beauty. Immediately, almost anyone would exclaim, *Hey, that's good!* Some will even say further, *Well, it's not only good, it's really good!!*

Let's look briefly into it. Without truth, our friendship wouldn't be true. When we are true to our friends, we have a beautiful friendship. What is true is the real. What is untrue is unreal. Likewise, what is true is the beautiful. Thus, what is true friendship is also truly the beauty of an ideal relationship.

When an issue arises, the sides we individually take tend to make friendship a difficult situation. Why? Most issues are resolved by the market place of prevailing ideas. It is very much like the

ungolden golden rule, *He who has the gold makes the rule*. Or, the ungolden golden mean, *He who has the gold can afford to be mean*. Remember this, if you want to test a person's character, give her or him power.

Think again, but first understand. Ideas may have a price. Ideals are priceless. Ideas divide and differentiate, separating people from each other. On the other hand, the ideals reach into the intuition, uniting and bringing people together into harmony.

When our ideas are guided by ideals, then the right decision is possible. Thinking brings in the ideas. Understanding draws out the ideals. This means that understanding must precede thinking. If the understanding does not come first, whatever we think will have no understanding at all. In other words, the right decisions are then possible when ideals precede ideas.

When the human mind functions without any ideals, understanding is not possible. There might be no such thing as the *wrong understanding*. If it is *wrong*, the *understanding* was not there in the first place. *Wrong thinking*, yes. It is *understanding* that apprehends *wrong thinking*. Thinking cannot go right unless understanding is present.

Understanding begins with self-understanding. From understanding ourselves, we grow toward understanding others. Then there can be universal understanding. When the understanding is universal, the thinking will be whole or holistic. Then the right action can follow.

When the human mind does not know, it fashions or clings to a belief as a substitute for knowledge. The issues that we resolve outside of ourselves are determined by the measure of our own self-understanding. The judgments that we make of others are projections of our own self-worth.

At times, mass morality has a way of deteriorating into hefty harassment or of clobbering its way through congressional or congregational clout. In our self-honesty we are watchful that we do not condemn others from a posture of moral superiority or from a holier-than-thou attitude. Instead, we can seek those positive

qualities in others that deserve or merit praise. A mind becomes what it vituperates or praises. A person can still be treated with wisdom and respect, even if their acts are unwise or their opinions considered controversial.

In the resolution of issues, we highlight principles far above personalities. Principles have to do with ideals. Personalities have to do with ideas. When ideas are devoid of ideals, the right ideas will not be there.

Ideas condition the human mind. Ideals free or liberate the mind. A mind that is conditioned can be controlled by others. It is a conditioned mind that manipulates another mind with the same conditioning.

Ideas play games. Whereas, ideals are realized by self-mastery. Then there is freedom within. This is the liberation from the pride or arrogance of the ego, waylaid by ideas without ideals, or conditioned by selfish ideas about the ideals.

Fortunately, no one person has more ideals than another. The ideals are part and parcel of our own higher or altruistic nature. This is the true self. Our own real self. Here is what makes us different from each other. There are those, like the great Teachers of the world religions, they have intuitively realized the power of ideals within, living them accordingly in their inner and outer lives. They become perfective role models. And the rest of us are still growing and awakening into this intuitive perception.

Ideals enable us to think for ourselves. When the ideals within each one of us are activated, universal understanding born out of self-understanding arises. In this ideal understanding, ideal thinking can proceed. Then ideal action takes place.

In the altruism of the ideals, there is intelligence. Our ideas find clarification and guidance. The right decisions can be made. Thus do we bring beauty and order into our lives, enhancing our oneness with humanity.

