

FAITH & SPIRITUALITY

We Need More Tolerance

BY CHRISTIE DOUGHERTY

The 21st century is lacking in progress of the most important kind; tolerance. We learn about decisions such as that made by a Denver Catholic School to ban a child of two lesbian mothers from attending a pre-school or a decision by a school board in Mississippi to cancel prom rather than allow a same sex couple attend. We learn about a group of students on a field trip who were asked to leave based on their race. Closer to home a decision is made to refuse a Presidential speech about staying in school based on politics, a decision to limit educational information based on parental and community intolerance.

The Backcountry, as we locals call it, is a diverse population. We are lucky enough to have residents of racial, religious, political, and lifestyle diversity. Tolerance is not about condoning something. Tolerance is about realizing we do not have that right to begin with. By definition tolerance is a fair, objective, and permissive attitude toward those whose opinions, practices,

race, religion, nationality, etc., differ from one's own; freedom from bigotry.

Do you have a bumper sticker voicing your opinion to take away or refuse equal rights to another human being? Do you use your religion or political views to justify your intolerance? Do you limit your exposure to information that never questions but only supports your views of the world? If you answered yes to any of these you are, regardless of reason, practicing intolerance. There is no shade of gray.

Freedom of speech is wonderful, this is not in question. The statement here is that we are personally responsible for choosing how we use that freedom. If you choose to use freedom of speech to voice intolerance do not expect others to be fooled by your intentions.

"The wonderful thing about tolerance is the ease at which we can accept it as a way of life, how much more enjoyable life becomes when we stop asking others to conform or be like us. Children are born with this acceptance

of others. Children take each other at face value. A child will not hold back friendship due to color of skin, foreign clothing or accent, which God they believe in, or what the others family consists of. Unlike adults who use their own discomfort, religion, upbringing, or pettiness as excuses for intolerance. Children seek out their similarities while accepting their differences. Perhaps it is time we let our children teach us rather than the other way around." -Chris Green.

1. "GROUPS PROTEST DECISION NOT TO RE-ENROLL CHILD OF LESBIANS." 8 MARCH 2010 CNN NEWS. <[HTTP://WWW.CNN.COM/2010/US/03/08/COLORADO.LESBIANS.CHURCH/INDEX.HTML?IREF=ALLSEARCH](http://www.cnn.com/2010/US/03/08/COLORADO.LESBIANS.CHURCH/INDEX.HTML?IREF=ALLSEARCH)>.

2. "MISSISSIPPI SCHOOL SUED FOR CANCELING PROM OVER LESBIAN STUDENT." 12 MARCH 2010 CNN NEWS. <[HTTP://WWW.CNN.COM/2010/LIVING/03/11/MISSISSIPPI.PROM.SUIT/INDEX.HTML](http://www.cnn.com/2010/LIVING/03/11/MISSISSIPPI.PROM.SUIT/INDEX.HTML)>.

3. "POOL TO MINORITY KIDS: YOU CAN'T SWIM HERE" 10 JULY 2009 CBS EARLY SHOW. <[HTTP://WWW.CBSNEWS.COM/STORIES/2009/07/10/EARLYSHOW/MAIN5149195.SHTML](http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2009/07/10/EARLYSHOW/MAIN5149195.SHTML)>. DICTIONARY.COM

Potrero Church Services Conducted in English & Spanish

The Potrero Community Church is pleased to announce that services are conducted in English and Spanish simultaneously. Both English and Spanish speakers will enjoy singing, praying and hearing the message in their language.

building, services are held at the Potrero Community Center on Potrero Valley Road at 9:am on Sunday and 7 pm on Wednesday.

Work on the church building is progressing.

Due to a fire that demolished the lower level of the church

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That new commandment? Was this - No longer were they to love others as they loved themselves. From that night on, they were to love others as he had loved them. Love now had a new standard. And it was Jesus.

Our love for others is now to be like his; a servant of love

for the least among us, and as necessary, a challenging love for those who cause their suffering and perhaps even, a sacrificial love for all. Our love is to be a way of life, which even the fear of death cannot diminish. Jesus wants us to understand that, should we follow him, should we,

too, challenge the powerful on behalf of those who suffer under that power, the consequences for us can also be death. And because of this, he profoundly wants us to know that we are not alone. We are filled with his spirit. And he is with us always.

Advice & Tips from the Purple Mountain Sage



BY SHARON COURMOUIS, SACRED ROCKS RESERVE

Increase your enjoyment of living:

"Holding on to anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else; you are the one who gets burned."
~Buddha

Recipe:
Apricot Glazed Chicken w/ toasted walnuts & melted blue cheese



Ingredients:
1 TBS Olive Oil
1 lb boneless/skinless chicken breasts or breast tenders
1 C Smuckers Apricot Pineapple Preserves
1/4 C soy sauce
1 TBS honey
1 TSP salt
1/3 cup walnut pieces
1/4 C blue cheese crumbles

In large skillet, heat 1Tbs oil. Add chicken to skillet. While chicken is cooking, mix preserves, soy sauce, honey and salt, taste before pouring over chicken. - adjust the glaze to your taste; set aside. Turn chicken when very lightly browned on one side. While that cooks another minute or so, toast walnuts in a small pan. Pour sauce over chicken and mix to coat. Allow to bubble about 5 minutes. Toss walnuts into skillet and mix. Allow to simmer for about 10 more minutes or until glaze has thickened. About 5 minutes before serving, sprinkle blue cheese over the top and reduce heat to simmer. Serve over rice and enjoy.

Mad Face

Last Friday was a day of anger. I woke up mad at something from the prior day [an argument with my hubby], my teenager would NOT wake up to get to school despite being called many times, was slug-

gard and ended up being late, my daughter did not return my call concerning an important project [she is my virtual assistant], the parakeets screeched in the morning, the car was nearly out of gas so I had to make an unplanned trip to fill up, I could not figure out what to wear, forgot an appointment -- in all, a wreck of a day.

While driving in the car, I noticed my face was a mad face. My lips were tight and bunched up. My eyes were squinty and there was a deep furrow in my forehead between the eyes. My cheeks were pushing up toward my eyes. I wanted EVERYONE to know that I was angry. I refused to speak in conversation. I concentrated on being angry. I wanted to be angry. I wanted to hold onto my anger. I wanted people around me to feel my upset-ness. I remember being inside this mad-face and relishing it. I am quite sure that whatever I ate or drank just curdled in my belly because of the ire that oozed from the very pores of my skin. Gosh, I simply bathed myself and my surroundings with the intense rushing of anger.

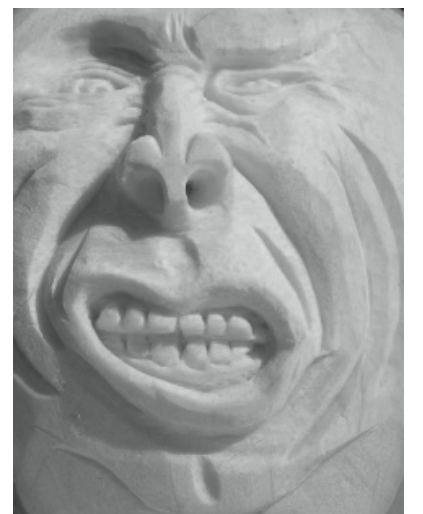
After many hours of this, my thinking mind said "get it OUT of you or it will harm you." My thinking mind said this several times before I heard it. And then I really took a long look at myself as if from a distance and administered a swift mental kick in the derriere "go take a hike." I had to force myself out, and had to force the first hundred steps. Then I began noticing what was outside of me.

The first grass was growing under the trees after the big rains of last week. The rain ruts through Sacred Rocks changed the landscape somewhat, turning up many shiny bits of mica, strewn like jewels on the ground. The labyrinth had leaves piled up on the north sides of each circuit, reflecting different shadows as the sun was descending into the dusk. A

flock of small brown birds with very black heads pecked in the dirt nearby and did not take flight as I passed by. "Hello, girls," I said to five wild turkeys that roam our park, and they followed me a ways. The clouds were billowing and white but slowly waltzing across the bluest of skies. My mouth changed into a smile, the eyes relaxed, the furrowed brow let go, my step lightened, my body lightened, my spirits lightened. A flash of understanding came to

me. The world of nature continues its path whether I am angry or happy. I really can choose to let go of the anger and bask instead in contentment.

Perhaps there is value in being really, really mad, and then consciously moving it OUT. Perhaps we ought to save up all the things we are mad about and spend one day a month just being angry. But ONLY one day a month. It might be good to write down those things that tick you off. Or scribble bullet points of the argument with your spouse. Sketch a picture of an incident that annoyed you. Then just toss them all into a shoebox and on the Mad-Face Day you choose [like the last Friday of the month], put on your mad face, get the details out of the box, one by one, and just savor it. Yes, hold tight to the feelings and your position of being right and your mean mouth and furrowed brows. Can you imagine there are those who actually LIVE in this place, day after day? At the end of your Mad-Face Day, however, act quickly to get it out of you. You might choose to hike up a hill, to walk vigorously, dance with some funky music, or work the punching bag in the gym. It is good to really work your body and let it go, let it go, let it go. Or you might choose to look closely at your own mad-face in the mirror, and then laugh long and hard at your own posturing and thus release the mad-face until you choose to put it on again.



The Purple Mountain Sage welcomes questions from readers! Write to us at: askthepurplemountainsage@gmail.com. The Purple Mountain Sage is Sharon Courmouis, co-owner of Sacred Rocks Reserve and RV Park, a 163-acre wilderness preserve and campground in Boulevard, CA, which is also home to the Sacred Rocks Artists' Colony. Sharon can be reached by calling: 619-766-4480. Visit the Sacred Rocks Reserve website at: www.sacredrocksreserve.com.