I Think Heâ€™s on to Something

Description

Scanning remarks on Little Green Footballs this morning yielded a link to a blog discussing emotional reactions and how we differ in the â€œWestern worldâ€• from those in the Mulsim world.

â€œTribal Emotionsâ€• is this offering from Elphidelphi. I think Ben (ths contributor) is onto something.

> [â€¦] Seneca and Cicero are describing a habit still very much alive today: the control we maintain over our emotions. Indeed, this is an essential aspect of the civilized world. Modern western readers will at first disagree with the idea that their free and open society is marked by the suppression of emotions. Are we not bombarded on a daily basis with appeals to â€œopen up,â€• to let our emotions out? But those who have lived their entire lives in the Western Oasis often donâ€™t realize that, even at their most exuberant or their most forlorn, they donâ€™t even approach the extremes of unchecked human emotions. [â€¦]

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I also think, as I read his short essay, that this ties into â€œopening upâ€• emotionally here in the â€œWest.â€• There certainly is a place for emotional displays, but, in a civilized society, it certainly is useful to have your moment, and then get back in the game. Unchecked emotions can, as Ben describes (and the mediaâ€™bâ€™Allah as well) lead to long term problems, which, would pretty much detail why we see peole burning churches and killing nuns because they have their feeling hurt when discuss the violence endemic to their culture.

My take is we are seeing a crack in the wall here in the West with the angry, foul language filled, high volume, shreiking political and cultural discussions. Scan a few of the left wing blogs, if you have a strong stomach and have â€œheard those wordsâ€• before and they do not offend you, but the vicious verbal and typed attacks (records for the rest of civilization in archiving engines) are legend â€œover there.â€•

The bad news is I suspect the â€œtouchy feely, get in touch with your inner childâ€• crowd is driving the problem. In doing so, they are asking us to do here, what Ben talks about over there: Opening the old wounds and meditating on them. I think, if youâ€™re strong enough to analyse that event well, then it may moderate your daily living. If youâ€™re not, then itâ€™s just one more seeping, ugly issue that you have re-placed on your plate to operate with the rest of your life. Greatâ€¦.

Many years ago, I was told profanity was used because you couldnâ€™t express yourself. I found, while in leadership postitions, the use of profanity in the process actually made things worse, and not better, thereby either causing things to take longer, or getting less than an acceptable job done, if it got done at all. Sometimes it actually takes some personal discipline to hold your tongue and to think of the proper words before you open your mouth, but it always yielded a far superior result.

In both the international and internal political/cultural arenas, this exercise of self restraint would serve all of us well.

Category

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